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AUTHOR Curt, Carmen Judith Nine
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ABSTRACT

Differences between American (Anglo) and Latin American cultures, particularly the culture of Puerto Rico, in the area of non-verbal communication (NVC) are examined in this work. Specific contrasts in language and kinesic patterns between the two cultures are illustrated in descriptions of communicative gestures employed by Puerto Ricans in the following: smiling; staring and eye contact; silence vs. noise; clothes; money matters; laughter and play; frankness vs. reticence; and in greetings, farewells and interruptions. A case study of linguistic and non-verbal characteristics of Puerto Rican school children in Brooklyn is presented to further illustrate NVC contrasts between the two cultures. Implicit in this examination is NVC's potential role in improving intercultural communication. It is suggested that studies of NVC should be included in American bilingual and English as a Second Language programs. A list of references is also provided in this document. (Author/EB)

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NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN PUERTO RICO

BY

DR. CARMEN JUDITH NINE CURT

Professor at the University of Puerto Rico

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AUREA E. RODRIGUEZ
Director

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ASSESSMENT
Lesley College
9 Mellen Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 492-0505

DISSEMINATION
385 High Street
Fall River, MA 02720
(617) 678-1425

JOHN R. CORREIRO
Director

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INTRODUCTION

It is a widely held dogma of faith among many educators and in particular among many language teachers that language is the most important feature of any culture. As a language teacher myself, and that language, ESL — English as a second language —, this unexamined dogma made my professional life easy in Puerto Rico, for the direction of my efforts was clear: in order for my ESL students at the University of Puerto Rico to learn to operate in the English-speaking world effectively they only had to learn to speak good English and to understand it well, besides learning to read and write it. Lately, new knowledge has made my cultural and linguistic dogma come shattering to the ground in a thousand pieces, for I made the acquaintance of NVC — nonverbal communication.

According to the most famous kinesicist in the field of NVC, the anthropologist Ray L. Birdwhistell, language is at most 35% of all of communication while the rest is NVC (1970, 50); that is, language is still very important, but it is not all of *it*, by any means. Condon adds that in order for communication between members of the same culture to take place, both speakers and listeners have to be "in tune" to both the language and the NVC employed by each; otherwise, communication suffers. (Lomax, 1967, 508). What then of communication across cultures, where not only the linguistic system varies but also the NVC? All that follows is part of my recent efforts to find an answer to this particular question.

The following pages include observations made by me over a period of several years regarding the contrasts that exist between American (Anglo) and Latin American cultures in the area of NVC, with emphasis placed on the culture I know best, my own, the Puerto Rican culture. These years of observation and of experiencing American ways vis-a-vis my Puerto Rican ways have made it possible for me to pinpoint several important contrasts which I am glad to share here with you. I hope one very important realization comes to you after having read what follows, namely, that these two cultures, the Anglo and the Puerto Rican are cultures almost in total reversal one with the other: what is acceptable and permissible in one is practically always not so in the other. This, of course, has very serious implications for the teaching of Puerto Rican and other Latin American children in the bilingual programs in the schools of large American cities,* where so many of the teachers belong to the Anglo culture, and as stated above and demonstrated below, a culture so

*We should also take a fresh and close look at the objectives for ESL teaching on the Island and in the United States.

different from that of their educational charges! Possibly, the high dropout rate among Hispanics in the schools here in the United States is due to a mounting degree of culture shock among them as the years in school progress. Eventually, they have to flee the horror they are experiencing there! They may have learned a partially functional brand of English, they may dress in jeans or other Anglo attire, but their deep culture is as Puerto Rican as that of their parents or grandparents who came from the Island, and this clashes head on with the Anglo culture in all NVC areas: kinesics, proxemics, haptics, polychronism vs, monochronism, tone of voice, occulisics, and on, and on, and on.

It is my hope that understanding and devoted teachers, both Latin and Anglo, and teachers from any ethnic group will become interested in the information that follows, and attain through reading it a fuller understanding of themselves and their educational charges. I also hope that these same teachers, with a sense of great urgency, will develop adequate teaching materials for their schools, that will make it possible for both Anglo and Latin children to systematically scrutinize their own NVC patterns, and contrast them with those of opposite cultures in their surroundings, in the hope that through understanding, inter-cultural communication may take place in our midst with more ease and less pain than it does now. In fact, the goal of all teaching in the United States, a country made up of many peoples trying to live together with dignity and respect, should be the promotion of this inter-cultural communication and the acquisition of the skill of switching cultural channels when the occasion demands it, a skill everybody needs in this multi-cultural world of ours we find right at our doorstep. This, however, does not mean that we or our children have to give up our cultural identity, something no one dares at long last to propose at present, for giving up one's cultural identity means giving up all desire to live, the destruction of the person, emotional bankrupcy, in short.

I hope that what follows will promote, above all, self-understanding and pride in who we are, whether Anglo or Hispanic, and then, a desire to promote ourselves understanding for and acceptance of others. This, I am sure will definitely result in the improvement of the quality of our living together. Together, but different!

CJNC

A mi bella gente, los puertorriqueños, donde encuentro tanto de mí.

And to my American friends, who without realizing it helped me so much in finding out who I was.

CULTURAL IDENTITY

I. Our Puerto Rican Identity

By the time we are seven and we are ready to enter school for the first time, every single one of us is already a cultural and linguistic entity. In other words, we are already Puerto Ricans, or Chinese, or Americans, and speak Puerto Rican Spanish, or Mandarin — or one of the many Chinese dialects — or American English. By then, everything that constitutes being a Puerto Rican, in our case, and speaking Puerto Rican Spanish is already functioning very effectively in us . . . but it is functioning out of awareness. That is, by seven we may be very cute Puerto Rican or Greek or Anglo children, but we do not realize what that means; we are not aware at all of the many elements that make up our cultural personality, our ethnic identity.

Most of us continue to be completely unaware of what makes us what we are even till the day of our death, for many people live unreflective lives. We are not conscious of the sounds we make when we speak, nor of the intonation patterns we use, nor how these contrast with other brands of Spanish or Chinese or Greek. Neither are we aware of our gestures, nor how we space ourselves when talking with others, nor if we stare and how long at people when we converse with them. This is of course the natural thing with culture. This "out-of-awareness" is with us in everything, for we do not question even our eating habits, our social and religious values, our attitudes. For that matter, nobody really does. Everybody takes his own particular culture very much for granted. If someone asked us if we touch people when we talk with them, we could not answer, unless we had studied, observed, and analyzed our conversational style like we did the circulation of the blood or the respiratory system in school.

The following is an attempt at making some of our unconscious cultural activities which are part of our Puerto Rican identity come out into awareness. I also hope this effort will be of use to other Puerto Ricans, particularly those living in the United States away from the Island, and to those of other ethnic backgrounds who are teaching Puerto Rican children in bilingual programs or in English classes in Puerto Rico or on the mainland.

I am sure if someone asked us what makes each one of us a Puerto Rican, or a Black, or an Arab, we would find the question quite hard to answer. Very, very few could answer in specific terms. Regarding our language, our Puerto Rican Spanish, not very many could say what it is really like. Regarding the Puerto Rican non-verbal system of communication, we know even less. What are our typical Puerto Rican gestures? Are there any that link us to our Spanish past? to our Indian past? to our African past? Most of us know very little about these things, even though all of them are very important and functioning elements at present of our cultural identity.

In fact, most Puerto Ricans do not know or are interested in finding out who their ancestors were. Are our features Indian, Spanish, Moorish, African? And our

hair? We identify hair better than anything else, but still in a rather superficial way. However, there are Indian faces all over Puerto Rico as well as Spanish and Arabic and African faces. There are blond people in Barranquitas, Aibonito, Naranjito. There are many dark people in Loiza, Canóvanas, Carolina. There are Indian faces in Utuado, Maricao, Las Marías. Do we know why? I am afraid we would have to answer "No". A friend of mine who traveled once in Northern Africa told me she had found great similarity between the Arabic young men there and our Puerto Rico youth. This is possibly true, for Spain was controlled by the Moors, specially the southern part of Spain, for eight long centuries before Columbus came over. Probably many of the men who came on La Pinta, La Niña and La Santa María in 1492 could have been descendants of the Moors even though their names were Díaz, Pérez, Martínez and Pagán, all of them names from southern Spain.

The Spanish "conquistadores" came close to destroying the whole Taíno population of our Island, of over 50,000. The new European diseases, the incredibly hard work they were subjected to, and the unbearable sadness of seeing themselves slaves killed off our Taíno men. But possibly the Taíno woman remained as the mother and lady of the new Spanish home; and a new people emerged, the Puerto Ricans. The Indian woman may have given the present Puerto Rican woman her basic characteristics, her supple and lithe body, her softness and feminine elegance, her girlish and quiet style, but also her independence and strong will. Later on, the African multitudes came to be used as slaves in the sugar fields. They were brought and disembarked where we now find Loiza, Carolina and Canóvanas. They brought their dark skins and frizzly hair so evident in the Puerto Rican mulatto — which so many of us are — as well as their music and their food.

There were many other immigrants to Puerto Rico, and they have also added things to our basic Spanish-Indian-African strain. Blond Spaniards from northern Spain settled in the hills of Puerto Rico where the weather was more tolerable for them because it was cooler — not too much, but still cooler — than that of the coastal towns. They had blond hair and blue eyes, and we have blue-eyed Puerto Ricans with blond and even red hair up in our hills of Barranquitas, Orocovis and Aibonito. These Puerto Ricans also have a different way of talking from that of the coastal regions; theirs constitutes our "jibaro" speech. Corsicans came from the French island between France and Italy. They brought names such as Raffuci, Schettini, Ricomini, Mattei, Blassini and many, many others which we find in Yauco and San Germán in the southwestern part of Puerto Rico.

Other French also came, and so we have names as Betancourt, Bou, Court, Recurt, Duffaut, Doitteau, once again in the southwest of the Island. Arabs also came from Lebanon and now we have Puerto Ricans with names such as Abdernoor, Koury, Asmar, Asad, Nun, and Galib. Germans, English, Americans and Irish came as well, and we have Puerto Ricans who carry names such as Roper, Colberg, Oppenheimer, O'Reiley, Lee, Wirshing. Even the Chinese came to help build the "Carretera Central", Highway No. 1, and thus we have slanted eyes and Chinese faces among the Puerto Ricans here with some of them carrying the nickname of "el chino" (the Chinaman).

Each group has left its traces on our small Island, and each has contributed in making the Puerto Ricans a very varied ethnic group, although the Spanish, Indian and African strain seem to be paramount in defining our ethnic identity.

This century has seen something new among the Puerto Ricans: they migrated in very large numbers to the United States. There have always been migrations here in Puerto Rico, but the size of our present one has been larger than any other. At present there are over 1,000,000 Puerto Ricans all over the United States, with many of them returning to Puerto Rico in the last few years. At present, there are close to 45,000 Neo-Rican children — one of the names given to the American Puerto Ricans on the Island. These Puerto Ricans look and behave very much like those on the Island, with one exception: they speak English. However, most of their non-verbal ways of communicating among themselves are Puerto Rican, even in second or third generations in the States. If we consider that, according to the American anthropologist Ray L. Birdwhistell,[1] communication is at most 35% language (page 50) then we understand what has happened to the NeoRicans: the remaining 65% of communication which is mostly made up of non-verbal activities, is still functioning among the American Puerto Ricans in New York City and Chicago and other large cities of the United States as it functions here in Puerto Rico. Their NVC (non-verbal communication) systems are Puerto Rican; their ethnicity — that is, their racial make-up — is Puerto Rican. Only their language has changed, for most of them speak English.[2] Efforts are being made at present, however, through bilingual programs, to have *American Puerto Ricans* recover their Spanish as well.

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[1] Ray L. Birdwhistell, *Kinesics and Context*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1970.

[2] In *many* cases, with a definite Spanish accent, or with *Black English* phonetic and vocabulary characteristics.

II. Culture and Its Characteristics

All cultures, then, like all languages are very, very old products of man. There is no such thing as a primitive — meaning simple or uncomplicated — culture or language. The history of every single culture and language gets lost in the very old history of man. In other words, we ourselves are not the product of just this present moment, for all of us carry within ourselves a wide and rich inheritance, so varied and so rich that it would take volumes to describe if it were done for each one of us. However, we do not realize this incredible, rich, unending and prolonged history. We all function completely unaware of these facts, and in our happy ignorance we do not realize we are the bearers of venerable and well-seasoned cultural and linguistic styles and habits. Every single person is the heir of an unimaginably vast cultural wealth.

If all cultures are old, then all cultures have many virtues as well as defects, for they are the products of fallible man. Some cultures may be superior to others only in their material and artistic products, and in other visible works of their cultures; but in their multiple hidden ways and basic living and daily activities, all cultures are neither superior nor inferior to others: they are simply different.

Culture, then, is the way of life of a people, the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes, and material things. All its varied content functions out of awareness after it has been learned at home from 0 to 4 or 5 years of age.

All of the above might suggest to some that man is not free, for he has been conditioned to act in ways that are beyond his control. This is true. But culture is needed by man so he can devote all his conscious powers and efforts to carry out his main task in life, his reason for living, namely, the pursuit of happiness, and his self-fulfillment through serving others and sharing love with them, and through the acquisition of truth and knowledge. All under the encompassing reality of being children of a loving God. Cultures with features that further the above pursuit, and many do, are not constraining, are not limiting of man's freedom. But there are cultures which hinder the above. These then must change, and it is for each one of us as cultural being's to decide whether our culture is helping us or hindering us to fulfill our main purpose in life. Some of the cultural changes we are witnessing in our 20th century make the attainment of man's goal harder to fulfill. We see many so-called "modern" men and women not loving people, but rather things; not using things, but rather people. These things have to be changed, for if a culture goes against man's fulfillment — read "salvation" — through love and service, that culture produces anomie, that is, alienation, total disruption of our selves.

One way to free ourselves from some of the normal constraints of culture is by studying it, by observing it, by talking about it, preferably by contrasting it with other cultures, for by studying the culture of others we deepen the awareness of our own. It is in observing what other people do out of awareness that we realize what we ourselves do.

A. The ten primary systems of culture[1]

All cultures develop from man's biological past and from the following ten activities which are all pervaded by language and deeply interrelated.

1. Interaction — This lies at the center of culture, for man must interact with other men and with nature. Everything grows from this interaction. However, styles of speech in interacting differ from culture to culture.

2. Association — Man joins with others to form groups, societies, and this he does in a variety of ways. The language used in our groupings is very specific within a culture, but it differs from culture to culture.

[1]Adapted from Edward T. Hall's *The Silent Language*, Chapter III, pages 42-62, Fawcett Publications, 1959.

3.	Subsistence	Everybody must eat, but what we eat differs from culture to culture. Even the time when we eat is different. Moreover, the language permitted at meals is not necessarily the same from culture to culture.
4.	Bisexuality	Studies of culture have shown us that how a woman or a man behaves is not a result of his/her sex, but rather of the culture where he has been brought up. Behavior that is exhibited by man in one culture may be classed as feminine in another.
5.	Territoriality	The history of man's past is largely an account of his efforts to wrest space from others and to defend space from outsiders.
6.	Temporality	Not all cultures give the same importance to time. Americans do, but Latin Americans are more relaxed about it.
7.	Learning	Man depends on learning in order to adapt and survive. But people from different cultures learn to learn differently. Education and educational systems are as filled with emotion and as characteristic of a given culture as its language.
8.	Play	Different cultures enjoy themselves, relax differently. In the USA, humor seems to be turned on or off, depending on the occasion. However, in Latin America and in the Far East, one encounters a continuum, a wide spectrum of subtle degrees of enjoyment.
9.	Defense	Man has developed his defensive techniques with outstanding ingenuity not only in warfare, but also in religion, medicine, and law enforcement. The content of religion, its organization, and the manner in which it is integrated with the rest of life varies greatly from culture to culture. Medicine also varies as one moves about the globe, as well as military activities.
10.	Exploitation	All man-made material things can be treated as extensions of what man once did with his body or some specialized part of his body. The evolution of weapons begins with the teeth and the fist, and ends with the nuclear bomb. Clothes and houses are extensions of man's biological temperature-control, mechanisms.

All of the above merely hints at the densely intricate origins of culture. Moreover, culture is closely tied with emotion and feeling, so that for each of us what we do as a Puerto Rican or as an American, Italian or Chinese is the right thing, the true, the noble, the beautiful thing to do. And this is healthy, for everybody should feel proud and joyful about the things he does, the "thing" he is. This is the reason why everybody feels that his culture, his ways, his food, his looks are the best in the world.

Because of this, we should learn to develop a skill which is indispensable in this world of ours where all spaces are shrinking and where all cultures are getting closer and closer to each other. We should develop, refine and constantly practice the skill of SWITCHING CULTURAL CHANNELS, as on a TV set, in order to be able

to interact with people from other cultures, and oftentimes with people from subcultures within our own, more effectively. This is indispensable if we are to avoid the pain, frustration and discomfort that usually accompanies trying to move and live in a culture different from our own. Actually, when a behavior is different enough from one in the dominant culture, that behavior seems to members of the latter somewhat "nutty", insulting, irresponsible, and many a times, sick, pathological. No one need to take the risk of being classified as insane or boorish any longer. As we become proficient in this skill, we will find it less difficult and highly satisfying to accept others and their styles of living.

B. The following are very perceptive quotations from a very sensitive and alert American anthropologist, Edward T. Hall, taken from his book *The Silent Language*:

1. (Americans who go to work in a foreign culture face) . . . a completely different way of organizing life, of thinking, and of conceiving the underlying assumptions about the family, and the state, the economic system, and even of man himself. (pages 33-34).
2. . . . culture controls behavior in deep and persisting ways, many of which are outside of awareness and therefore beyond conscious control of the individual. When the anthropologist stresses this point he is usually ignored, for he is challenging the deepest popular American beliefs about ourselves as well as foreigners. (Pag. 35).
3. We must learn to understand the "out-of-awareness" aspects of culture. (Pag. 38).
4. The real job is not to understand foreign cultures but to understand our own. (However) . . . learning one's own culture is an achievement of gargantuan proportions for anyone. (Pag. 39).
5. One of the most effective ways to learn about oneself is by taking seriously the cultures of others. (Pag. 40).
6. If culture is learned, then one should be able to teach it. (Pag. 45).
7. . . . man as a cultural being is bound by hidden rules and is not master of his fate . . . (this is so) . . . as long as he remains ignorant of the nature of the hidden pathways culture provides for him. (Pag. 111).
8. Full acceptance of the reality of culture would have revolutionary effects. (Pag. 165).
9. Man did not evolve culture as a means of smothering himself but as a medium to move, live, breathe, and develop his own uniqueness. (Pag. 165).
10. The Universe does not yield its secrets easily, and culture is no exception. (Pag. 165).
11. A real understanding of what culture is should rekindle our interest in life, an interest which is often sorely lacking in many of us at present. (Pag. 166).

12. Some time in the future, a long, long time from now, when culture is more completely explored, there will be the equivalent of musical scores that can be learned, each for a different type of man or woman in different types of jobs and relationships, for time, space, work, and play. (Pag. 167).

13. (Our formal time system) . . . we take so much for granted, was once a technical system known only to a few priests along the Nile who had perfected it in response to a need to forecast annual floods more accurately. (Pag. 130).

There is such a very pressing need these days: cross-cultural understanding — the new enterprise of learning to live together . . . together but different.

III. The Unity of Man

Is there anything humans have in common? Let us have a poet answer this question.

We are People

We are people, you and I
Like the people passing by,
We're alike, but different too,
I am I, and you are you.

We are all one family,
Light or dark, as it may be,
All are equal on this earth
When we measure human worth.

We all laugh when we feel gay,
Each one laughing his own way,
Some laugh low and some laugh high,
Some as if they're going to cry.

We all think, but separately,
And we needn't all agree.
We all listen, speak, compare,
All have different thoughts to share.

Different, different, yet the same:
When we want to play a game
We must all accept the rules
Though we come from different schools.

We are people, you and I
Like the people passing by,
Same but different, different, same
My name's_____, what's *your* name?

by Edith Segal[4]

[4]From *Elementary English*, Nov/Dec. 1973, p. 1223. "Edith Segal: Friend and Poet." Schwartz.

Edith Segal is an American poet who is quite worried about a particular cultural characteristic of the main culture of the United States, her country, which produces discrimination against citizens there which are not white, not Saxon, not Nordic. The "melting pot" ideal was offered by well-intentioned Americans for these groups, and everybody was to become American. Actually, white America is not culturally disposed to the "melting pot" idea, which we have seen functioning in Puerto Rico to a very large extent. White Americans are simply culturally conditioned against mixing with races darker than theirs. They cannot mix with Orientals, either. This is a deeply and widely held feeling — mostly out of awareness — which could be possibly traced to the Saxon, Germanic, and other Nordic strains in the United States. The poet Segal, as poets usually do, charters the way out of the racial and cultural problem of her country. But her message also applies to all peoples of the world. She believes that we do not have to melt our differences, and that we should keep the human mosaic as our richness and wealth. The world should be a mosaic of people with various and manifold cultural heritages, and yet a part of a human family of equals. She promotes for the above "non-accepted" races in the world, and in particular in the United States, the enjoyment of their right to retain their cultural, linguistic and ethnic identity. The alternative for the USA would be a nation with millions of citizens who feel and act less than human, since only in being what one is, and feeling respected because of it can we be human.

Edith Segal's dream is the American dream. For a while there, the United States and its people seemed to have lost this dream. However, I think the USA is most decidedly regaining it. Such Congressional Acts as the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and many others of recent years are proof of it.

Many people seem to agree that the new version of the American dream is "to find and experience the new enterprise of living together," as Don Jaime Benítez, former President of the University of Puerto Rico said at a New York convention on bilingual education.[5] Edward T. Hall, the famed American anthropologist adds the following: "There must be a rekindling (in the USA) of the adventuresome spirit and excitement of our frontier days . . . We are confronted with urban and cultural frontiers today . . . We need both excitement and ideas and we will discover that both are more apt to be found in people than in things . . . in involvement rather than in detachment from life."[6]

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[5]New York City, April, 1974.

[6]E. T. Hall's, *The Hidden Dimension*, p. 187. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1966.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN PUERTO RICO

by

CARMEN JUDITH NINE CURT
University of Puerto Rico
Chairman: "Paralinguistics: Non-Verbal Communications Panel"

TESOL Convention
Denver, Colorado

March 5, 1974

Teachers of children from different ethnic backgrounds are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that more than mastery of a second language is necessary to communicate with their students and with other native speakers of the same language. This fact, however, is not entirely new. Some of us have personally experienced this sense of awareness when we have communicated with people of other nationalities. We have also experienced communication difficulties even with people from other social levels in our own country. Many middle-class members seem to have difficulty in establishing meaningful communication with people from another "class." This is partly a result of the fact that middle-class parents usually choose schools for their children very carefully in order to insure that their offsprings associate with youngsters of "equal" status. They do this — they rationalize — to prevent their children from coming into contact with "bad" influences: different speech habits and differing styles in interpersonal relationships.

These differences, however, are not necessarily "bad", as some parents seem to think; they are simply differences. The fact is that variations exist not only between social classes but also between individuals. And this is good. It is indeed a blessing that people have maintained their individuality in spite of the tendency in most societies to strive for conformity. "Vive la resistence!"

However, one fact does remain: although we can maintain our individual personalities, we do belong to social classes and we generally behave according to the norms of our respective group. Children from different ethnic backgrounds, therefore, also display "peculiarities" in their behavior. These idiosyncrasies, however, reflect their particular culture and they are not necessarily "bad", although some teachers seem to think that they are. Most language teachers are fully aware of the differences that exist between languages, but they may not realize that important cultural differences exist as well. In fact, some teachers often see cultural peculiarities as obstacles to real understanding and fruitful classroom work. However, all of us teachers should strive to understand the socialization process of people from other ethnic backgrounds.

The purpose of this article is to discuss an important cultural difference between Puerto Rico and the United States : non-verbal communication. This type of communication contrasts, sometimes dramatically, between the two cultures. It should be noted that the interest in non-verbal communication has been growing among those in the foreign-language teaching profession and those concerned with EFL or ESL learning. E.T. Hall's *Silent Language* (1959) exposed new areas of interest for many of us. This past May, a work session at the TESOL (1973) Convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico, dealt with paralinguistics. Terms such as ethnomethodology, kinesics, proxemics, and others were discussed. In that particular session, which was filled to capacity, I had the opportunity to demonstrate the existence of a varied non-verbal system in Puerto Rico, a system most teachers in the United States were not aware of. The immense interest expressed by those in attendance was gratifying and it prompted the writing of this article in which I will describe some of the non-verbal communication practiced in Puerto Rico, a behavior which discloses a variety of meanings. I will also briefly mention some things typical to our community which may help the classroom teachers in the United States in establishing rapport and the adequate "ambiente" to enhance learning by Puerto Rican children.

My interest in gestures and other non-verbal ways of communicating in Puerto Rico came from my own experience upon returning from a three year stay in the States. When I met my old friends again, I noticed that I had the sensation that they were too close to me. I was also startled by the fact that they constantly touched me (friends of my own sex) while talking to me. I also perceived I was a little annoyed by their kissing. Moreover, I noticed their wiggling noses when I asked certain questions, and their constant smiling. Then, I understood what was happening to me. I was looking at them as a native American would, not as a Puerto Rican.

It then occurred to me that my ESL students here at the University of Puerto Rico in trying to communicate in English were also using Puerto Rican non-verbal ways of communicating. I verified this with some of my students. I asked them something in English, and wiggling noses, plus other Puerto Rican non-verbal ways went into action. They were using Puerto Rican ways in an English-verbal context. I felt very uneasy. This sort of thing just would not do in effective communication in the United States or anywhere in the English-speaking world. But my students had no

knowledge of this; nobody had told them, nor had those who had come before them been told.

Since then I started observing and classifying non-verbal behavior in Puerto Rico. I have also tried to teach my students some of the modifications a Puerto Rican speaking English has to undergo if his communication is to be adequate, non-offensive, and, more important, operative. However, I have made it clear to my students that they are not learning a "better" way of behaving; they are simply learning a different way. Actually, they are learning a very important skill in order to function adequately in another culture and setting, a skill any educated person in today's world should master. I call this skill "switching cultural channels", in fact, an indispensable asset for any teacher of children from different ethnic groups. I hope the following observations help some teachers in the United States to switch cultural channels when dealing with Puerto Rican school children.

I. NOSE WIGGLING AND POINTING WITH LIPS

	MEANINGS
1. Wiggling of nose with or without wrinkling of forehead. You look at person you are communicating with straight in the eye	"What did you say?" "What is the matter?" "What is going on?"
Above done with concerned look on face.	"Has anything wrong happened?" "Do you need some help?" "What ails you?" "Do you feel all right?"
2. Pointing with puckered lips at a person and then smiling. You are not blowing a kiss when you do this.	"Listen to that. That's cute." "Says he/she!" "Well, that's a cute idea!" (This gesture is sometimes used after you have said something critical of the listener, which could be considered sarcastic and offensive).
3. Pointing with puckered lips at person or object.	"That one over there." "Those." "There." "Over there."
4. Wiggling of nose/pointing with puckered lips at someone or something.	"Who's that over there?" "Who's he/she?" "Who are they?" "What's he/she up to?" "What's the matter with him/her/them?"

II. FINGER MOVEMENTS

1.	Pointing with finger.	"That one." "Those." "May I have some of that, please?" "Pass that, please."
2.	Moving forefinger from side to side.	"No, indeed." "No, sir. You don't." "No, that's wrong."
3.	Touching forehead with finger.	"Intelligent."
4.	Circling finger at right of forehead without touching it.	"He/she is crazy!" "You're crazy."
5.	Bunched fingers, touch lips, and then recede while suddenly opening up. Bunched fingers can also touch cheek twice.	"Exquisite", "fine", "chévere", "chuchin", "tops!", "great!"
6.	Rubbing of forefinger with thumb.	"Money."
7.	Rubbing of forefinger and next finger with thumb.	Accompanies expressions referring to "softness," "substance."
8.	Holding thumb and forefinger parallel but seperated about an inch or less.	"When talking about or implying something very small, tiny."
9.	Holding thumb against forefinger, close to end of same.	Same as above.
10	Fingers of both hands close and open twice, in pear-shape form, with palms up, at chest level.	"Loads", "many", "a bit", "oodles."
11.	Forefinger and tip of thumb meet to form a circle. Then hand moves up and down at chest level.	"O. K.", "right", "chévere", "fine", "tops" (It also has a taboo sexual meaning: a woman's organ).

III. HAND MOVEMENTS

1.	Moving hand at the waistline towards the outside with sharp movements from the wrists. (This is also done without the sharp movements, by simply hold-	"What is it?" "What's this all about?" "What's happened?" "What do you mean by this?" "That can't be."

	ing hands out at waistline in outstretched position.)	
2.	Moving right hand from side to side with a motion at the wrists. Lips closed and spread out, and head tilted to one side.	"So, so."
3.	Right hand up, all fingers spread out, elbow at waist touching it.	"Please, wait..."
4.	Shaking hands up and down, very fast, often accompanied by jumping up and down.	To show excitement when your team is winning at games, athletic meets, etc.
5.	Hand up above head, fingers snapping close and open several times but in an outward position.	This is used to call over someone who is at a distance. The person's name is called out first and the gesture follows. This gesture is often taken to mean "good-bye" by Americans.
	The "good-bye" or "hi" gesture is simply the arm stretched above head with palm of hand facing the person who is being greeted.	
6.	Both hands face outwards at chest level, with fingers in claw formation.	Angry; sore; furious.
7.	Hand is moved back over right shoulder.	Long ago, yesterday, last week, etc. (If hand is moved outward in front of face, it means "future". "Present" is signalled by making hand move up and then down at chest level.)
8.	Hands shoot up, with arms stretched way up high over head.	"A lot", "loads", "deeply".
9.	Hand waved from side to side at head level, or higher above head. Fingers loose and somewhat spread out.	The "goodbye" gesture.
10.	Hand shaken out at shoulder level, as if drying finger tips.	"Forget it!" "Who cares!" "There is no point in going on with this."

11.	Rubbing palms of hands, first the right one over the left one, and then the left over the right. It is usually done one on each side. Or just once with a sharp movement outwards.	"That's over with." "Nothing left!" "We have no more." "We are sold out."
12.	Right hand up at shoulder level, palm out. Slow pushing motion front and back, done several times. Often accompanied with the expression "Ajá".	"Fine, fine. A fine friend you are." "I'll get even with you." "You didn't expect this, but I caught you."
13.	Hitting right elbow of bent right arm several times with closed left fist.	"He/she is tight, miserly."
14.	Moving of fingers in fan shape with arm stretched back slightly behind right thigh.	"He stole money." "He's a thief."

IV. SHOULDER MOVEMENTS

1.	Shoulders shrugged high and held there. Mouth corners drop as head tilts to side.	"I don't know. Search me!" "Who knows." "God only knows."
2.	Same as above with hands reaching up toward shoulders and above.	Same as above.
3.	Shrugging of shoulders alone.	"Who cares!" "I don't give a . . ."
4.	Patting of one's own shoulders and smiling complacently.	"I'm tops, of course."

V. HEAD MOVEMENTS

1.	Nodding of head up and down sometimes accompanied with the expression "Ujú."	"Yes. Right. Correct." "Me, too."
2.	Nodding of head from side to side.	"No, that's wrong." "No, I don't.
3.	Nodding of head from side to side with lips spread out and concerned look on face.	"Incredible!" "How sad!" "I can hardly believe it." "How could such a thing have happened?"

4. Tilting head to side, and spreading closed lips down at the corners.	This is an answer to "How do you feel?" or "How did you find it?, how was it?" Equivalent to "So, so."
5 Giving head a jerk up, and back.	"What's the matter?" "Hi." "What can I do for you?"
6. Giving head a jerk up, and back, with raised forehead and brows, and lips down at the corners, while looking at someone. Usually accompanied by the expression "¡Eh, eh!"	"Who does he think he is?"
7. One nod, while looking at a person.	"Come in."

VI. FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

1. A smile.	"Please." "Thank you." "You're welcome."
Smiling per se is a way of girls recognizing each other in passing whether they know each other or not. However, if a girl smiles at a man, this is as good as saying: "You may approach me."	
Puerto Rican urban boys smile less than rural boys and less than girls in general.	
2. Eyes wide open, face very serious staring at you after you have said or asked about something Sometimes accompanied by frowning.	"What was that, please?" "Would you mind repeating? I didn't understand what you said."
3. A smile, big eyes, forehead up.	"Yes? What can I do for you?"
4. Unblinking look towards you while standing near you or slightly far away.	"Excuse me, please. May I see you for a minute?" "May I speak with you a minute, please?"
When the above is done to a clerk at a store, he/she immediately recognizes you even though he may be taking care	

of another customer. You as a newcomer, have priority over the first customer. This would never happen in the States where a clerk takes care of one customer at a time.

VII. TOUCHING

1. Among friends, touching lightly arm or shoulder of friends of your sex.
   "Excuse me, please." (In passing).
   "May I see you for a minute?"
   "May I speak with you?"
2. Sometimes grabbing arm or shoulder for a couple of seconds.
   All of the above.
   "Hi! Great to see you!"
3. When girls and older women who are friends meet, there is touching and grabbing of arms, kissing on one side of face, and slight rubbing of upper parts of bodies. Words are also said, and there is laughter and giggling.
4. When boys meet, there is hugging, violent beating of back, pushing of stomach with one hand or closed fist.
5. There is constant touching and jabbing with finger and hand of person you are talking to. This among those of the same sex only.

There are several other things that include language, however, but which are different from what one is accustomed to in the States. I would like to mention the following very briefly.

1. *In conversation,* while talking in a group, interruptions are allowed without excusing oneself for interrupting. After the one who has interrupted is (partly, sometimes) through, the other person continues.
2. *Calling the attention of a person.* Besides the silent standing nearby, and the staring, a person may simply use "¡Pssst!" This is normally done at restaurants and public places. This behavior is offensive in an American context.

3. *Kidding and joking.* There is constant kidding and joking among peers in a Puerto Rican situation. This is referred to in Spanish as "bayoya, relajo, pasarato". It takes place all the time at any gathering even at big meetings and conventions. The low-voiced comment (and sometimes not so low) made to a friend of friends nearby while someone is speaking is permissible. In an American setting, this would be considered highly disrespectful. In Puerto Rico, it is not.

   In a classroom, the joking and kidding usually cease when the person in authority — in this case, the teacher — is present. If a teacher allows the "pasarato" to go on, discipline is seriously impaired. He/she is signalling to the students that he/she has given up his role of authority, and this is dangerous with Puerto Rican children. They expect teachers to exercise control, to be authority figures, and they do not function well nor learn well in a too permissive an atmosphere. At least in Puerto Rico.

4. *Staring.* It is permissible for men to stare at girls, and even to drop comments — "piropos" — on their passing. But girls do not stare at men in Puerto Rico . . . as yet.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN THE ESL CLASSROOM, A FRILL OR A MUST?

CARMEN JUDITH NINE CURT

University of Puerto Rico

Río Piedras, Puerto Rico

Speech given at two TESOL Conventions:
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It is indeed a great pleasure to be here at this time of the year with you, fellow colleagues, and to have the opportunity of talking with you about a field which promises to be a very interesting and productive one for us teachers of English as a second language: non-verbal communication across cultures and in ESL.

And talking about "culture", it has been quite a culture shock to get used to cold weather again, and if my voice cracks, it is one of the signs of the strain my body is undergoing in trying to switch cultural channels regarding temperature.

But getting used to the new experiences in temperature has not been the only source of culture shock in being in the States once again after 10 years of absence. It simply shook me out of my normal cultural state of tropical calm and contentment to find that most everything works here to an unprecedented degree of efficiency if compared to my own culture: telephones work to perfection, trains run on time, airplane tickets are sent to you through the mail, and when breakfast at McDonald's closes at eleven A.M., it does close at eleven.

All these experiences have simply thrilled and fascinated me, for I then project them to our own field of teaching and definitely perceive with joy that those people in your midst who belong to minority groups will eventually be receiving their due share of justice and fair treatment in a most efficient manner, for they are in a country at a time when justice and fair treatment are being taken more and more seriously. The principle of efficiency as I see it is being applied more and more to abstract concepts, at long last. Sometimes it takes the National Guard to do it, but Justice — with a little push — is winning its battle.

I am staying at Philadelphia for this semester on my sabbatical year away from the University of Puerto Rico, studying and reading at Temple University. I cannot help but put the whole new activity of ESL teaching and bilingual programs into the perspective of the meaning of the United States of America. These activities — ESL teaching and bilingual education — make a lot of sense in a country like the United States, which is not a nation of one people, but many peoples, trying to do what for many is madness and a scandal, trying to live together in peace and mutual respect. This amazing feat of the many and the different trying to live together with dignity was basically the daring experiment and dream that the founding fathers of this country had in mind and made a reality when they brought forth this nation.

For a while there, the United States and its peoples seemed to have lost this dream. But I think this country is most decidedly regaining it. Such Congressional Acts as the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and the many others that have led to it are proof of this. Many people seem to agree that the new version of the American dream is "to find and experience the new enterprise of living together"[7] as Don Jaime Benítez, former President of the University of Puerto Rico said at a New York Convention on Bilingual education. Edward T. Hall, a famed American anthropologist adds the following: "(There must be) a rekindling of the adventuresome spirit and excitement of our frontier days . . . We are confronted with urban and cultural frontiers today . . . We need both excitement and ideas and we will discover that both are more apt to be found in people than in things, . . . in involvement rather than in detachment from life."[8]

Today I would like to discuss with you the new field of non-verbal communication as it applies to ESL teaching and bilingual programs, a field which I feel is rich in its possibilities for making our efforts more effective in giving our students — the different ones in our midst and the mainstreamers — better tools for a

[7]Benítez, Jaime. Speech. Convention on Bilingual Education, New York City, April, 1974.

[8]Hall, Edward T. *The Hidden Dimension*, p. 187.

successful and richer life. I also feel it can give both the English-speaking and non-English-speaking students a clearer vision of themselves and others which I am sure will lead to better understanding and acceptance of those around.

I mention English-speaking people — Anglos, to you — because to me it is a paradox that what is a mark of education for the elite in all civilized countries of the world is considered in the United States as Joshua Fishman says in talking about bilingual education ". . . as merely a disease of the poor and the disadvantaged."[9] I definitely hope with Dr. Fishman that the day will come here in the United States when everybody ". . . may have the chance of getting a bilingual education . . . without necessarily being poor or even Hispanic."[10]

I am sure if they asked you what your objectives were in your ESL teaching to non-English speaking children you would summarize them more or less like this: 1) I want to give my non-English speaking students the tools for their better functioning in an English speaking community so that they will become functional and operational in English. 2) I want to carry out my teaching in such a way as to increase their self-awareness and self-identity in order to decrease a sense of alienation among them. In other words, I do not want to make them anything but what they are, but I want them to carry in their hands effective tools to inter-relate in an English speaking community, to be able to study, to work, in short to lead a good life as they see fit to live it.

These objectives are no laughing matter. We are actually involved in the physical and mental survival of millions of people in this country, and when I hear that in a Philadelphia school district the drop-out percentage among Puerto Ricans is close to 80%, then I wonder what is happening to the implementation of these objectives. Possibly there are no such objectives, which is a very tragic matter, so serious that the only words that can describe those in charge are "irresponsible" and "callous".

I have always argued that when something is not happening right in the classroom, it is not the child who is at fault. In such a situation, something very crucial has been left out either in the preparation of the teachers or in the elements that make up the learning situation or in the methodology, and this last includes materials. Just one example from back home: our freshman students at U.P.R. were not learning and were consistently failing the speech component of our Freshman English (ESL) Course, students who are the most intelligent students in the whole island. After close scrutiny of our activities we found out several things:

1. Many teachers were not aware that in teaching foreign sounds, these are not heard by students — not heard at all — if they — the sounds — are not part of the phonemic map of their vernacular.

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[9]Fishman, Joshua. *The Language Education of Minority Children*, "Bilingual Education in a Socio-Linguistic Perspective", p. 92.

[10]Idem.

2. If the students could not hear the sounds, it was impossible for them to imitate them. We were asking them to do this immediately after a brief presentation of the sounds.

3. We were also asking them to practice words by looking at print first, making their Spanish-minded eyes look at words such as *HIT, HAT,* and *SUP* in the hope and expectation that they would produce sounds like /I/, /æ/, and / ə /, which do not exist in Spanish as phonemes.

Disaster had to ensue, and it did, for the teachers lacked 1) the necessary information for the teaching of this particular content, 2) the correct methodology, and 3) adequate materials.

In other words, if we are in the ESL field or in bilingual education in the United States and our objectives are not being carried out, we should stop and examine why the children are not learning. The learning of English is too important a matter, for our students to continue a situation that only leads to failure among them. There should not be any failures in the language classes. And there need not be.

We as ESL teachers are quite strong in the following areas of our specialization: 1) contrastive grammar studies, 2) contrastive phonetic studies, 3) the teaching of vocabulary and 4) the teaching of reading. We are doubtful about how to teach writing and we feel most unsure about how to teach the cultural dimension in our classes. This last one, however, is just as important as those mentioned before. But as a rule, most teachers are not aware, as Professor Don Knapp from Temple University says, "of how culturally determined even the simplest statements in English are and in any language, a fact which becomes most clearly apparent when they are examined in the context of real conversation for teaching purposes."[11] One example taken from those suggested by Dr. Knapp in his article "Using Structure Drills to teach Cultural Understanding."[12] will suffice.

Let's take the teaching of the position of frequency adverbs in a question. Suppose you have Puerto Ricans, Koreans, Greeks in your class. Something like this could be a very "alive" exercise:

A. What do you usually have for _____, Pedro, etc.?
(breakfast, lunch, dinner)

B. I usually have_____.

Or: Let's take the teaching of *I'd like* in answer to the question *What would you like . . . ?*

A. What would you like for _____ tonight, Hoi?
(dinner)

B. I'd like_____.

[11]Knapp, Don. "Using Structure Drills to Teach Cultural Understanding," pp. 1-2.

[12]Id., p. 4.

Probably a lot is being done by you with these types of activities in many of your classrooms; and dialogues and grammar drills are becoming more culturally pertinent.

However, regarding non-verbal communication, nothing seems to be happening as yet. Let me read this little poem to you, and take you from there into the discussion of such things as proxemics, haptics, kinesics, parakinesics, and their inclusion in our teaching. This is a poem by W. H. Auden, taken from *The Birth of Architecture*.

> Some thirty inches from my nose
> The frontier of my Person goes,
> and all the untilled air between
> is private "pagus" or demesne.
>
> Stranger, unless with bedroom eyes
> I beckon you to fraternize,
> Beware of rudely crossing it;
> I have no gun, but I can spit.

What is the message of the poem? In the field which studies space in interpersonal relationships across cultures, PROXEMICS, the personal (non-invadable, non-transgressible) distance at which you should stand away from somebody else in the United States and in many other northern countries of Europe is from 18" to 30". Then there is the intimate distance at which people also interrelate. In the United States, this distance is from skin contact to from 6" to 18". This is culturally determined, a learned behavior carried out day by day out of awareness, and it differs from culture to culture. How does space function in Latin American countries and in southern European countries? There, the personal distance is what is intimate distance in the United States, from 6" to 18". Thus, in dealing with Latins, many Americans feel that they want to spit because they find Latins too close, pushy, and too "sexy". How do the Latins feel when they talk to Americans . . . and see them cringing back to regain — without their knowing, of course — their culturally learned comfortable distance? Well, the Americans seem aloof, cold, uninterested, or racially (or politically) prejudiced? Explosive area of inter-personal relationship, right? Still, even though it is such a delicate point between these cultures, I have never seen references to space incorporated in the instructions in teaching ESL dialogues to our non-English speaking population, nor in teaching Spanish dialogues to our Anglo population.

Let us now go into HAPTICS, the study of touching. You already know, I am sure, that the Anglo culture of the United States belongs together with most northern European cultures to the non-contact, non-touching cultures. I remember the strange experience I lived on my first day here in the U.S. just a month and a half ago when I had to sit for about an hour in the lobby of the Law School at Temple, which was filled with young students. During that hour, of constant talking and bantering among the students, there was not a single instance of touching among them. It almost seemed weird to me. But it had to be like that. In matters of hours I

had found myself right in the midst of an entirely different culture from mine, particularly so in the matter of touching vs. non-touching. Latins touch to a degree that is outrageous and threatening and oftentimes insulting to most Anglos. In fact, touching is also a way of "talking" in most Latin countries. Take a normal everyday greeting among Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, you name them. If you have already met, if you are friends, there is constant touching and slapping of backs, kissing and rubbing of bodies. If two women of the same age and social status meet, there is hugging, kissing and rubbing of upper part of bodies in some cases. If men of the same age and social status meet, there is the beating of backs, a hug maybe, and the firm shaking of hands.* (Ask now Latins in the audience to get up and greet each other. Then, ask Anglos in the audience to stand up and greet each other). There are all kinds of non-verbal things involved and happening in even the simplest of greetings in all cultures. And all of you know that greetings and leave-takings are one of the first dialogues to be learned in most ESL courses of foreign language courses. They are indeed very complex activities non-verbally speaking. (Now have the Latins greet each other as the Anglos do, and the Anglos greet each other as the Latins do). Hard, wasn't it? We, all of us are culture bound; we have learned one way of behaving way back when we were small, and that is the "easy" and "right" way; it is our non-verbal vernacular. Not only that: we cannot shed it, anymore, than we can shed our language or our eating habits. However, if culture is learned, then it can be taught. But is this part of culture being taught in school? Are we instructing our students in our ESL and bilingual programs that if they are Latins they cannot go around over-squeezing Anglos, and are Anglos being taught that they should start squeezing their Latin friends if they do not want to be considered cold, unfriendly, rejecting and insulting as well?

My third example is taken from another contrasting area between Anglo and Latin cultures. The Anglo culture in the United States is a MONOCHRONIC culture while Latin cultures are POLYCHRONIC. A few examples will clarify the terms. In the United States, in the Anglo world, most interpersonal relations whether formal or informal are carried out in a one to one sequence. If you go to a store, the clerk takes care of one person at a time. You form lines at stamp windows, etc. I learned my lesson at Gimbels in New York City a long time ago, when I interrupted a dialogue a clerk was having with a customer to ask her about some beads she had in front of her. She snappily told me to wait for my turn. Mono (one) chronic (time) — one at a time. In Puerto Rico and in other Latin countries, a clerk takes care of two, three, four people at a time. Poly (many) chronic (time). A newcomer has priority over the previous customer. But, after five customers, I have seen a clerk getting anxious. Some of them start calling the manager for help.

Although shopping at stores is an important skill that any person living in the United States should master, now with self-service stores the problem has been reduced somewhat. Still, this contrast is an important one and should be included in

*However, in Latin cultures, members of the opposite sex, hardly touch each other. In the Anglo world, though, members of the opposite sex do touch each other quite a bit.

our teaching, because the situation repeats itself not just at stores; polychronism is applied in all inter-personal relationships in Latin cultures. Here's another example: If I, as a Puerto Rican teacher, am talking to one of my colleagues or to one of my students, and another colleague of mine or student approaches me wanting to talk to me, I immediately cease talking to the person I was talking to, and *acknowledge* the newcomer. And the three of us talk! This situation repeats itself constantly whenever conversations between two persons are taking place in a public or semi-public place, offices. Newcomers are never left out; in fact, they are invited to join in as a matter of courtesy or are admitted into a conversation that is already going on. When do you talk very privately? You have to do something very unusual for Puerto Ricans: you close your doors.

I believe this pattern is so drastically different from the Anglo pattern that Puerto Ricans and other Latins must be taught how to deal with people in a monochronic cultural setting. In the same fashion, Anglos must be taught how to deal with Latins and their polychronic pattern. I have seen Americans depart in despair from a store counter in Puerto Rico and from friendly conversations because they insisted in waiting their turn, or in speaking in a one to one order with their friend. At the stores, they tell the clerk they will wait their turn, when actually what they are doing is missing their turn completely.

Let me discuss KINESICS now, the field that studies body motions and gestures. Puerto Ricans have two very interesting gestures that many of you know quite well by now. I mean the "wiggling" of the nose to mean: "Who? What? What was that? What can I do for you?" Then, there is the pointing with puckered lips, which does not mean "the blowing of a kiss". It means: "There. Over there. That one. Those." Very well, before I go on, let us have some non-verbal pattern practice. (Practice). (Wiggle, wiggle; point, point, etc.)

Now, a Puerto Rican will use these gestures as complete questions, instead of the verbal patterns. Oftentimes, when a teacher asks something in English and the students do not understand, the noses go into action. The pointing with the lips is used constantly to point, to request something a distance away, and even to send messages of warm fellowship when it is joined to a smile to mean: "Listen to that love talk! That was a sweet thing to say!" But to this day, I have never "seen" questions or expressions like these in English. Let us practice these two gestures in a little silent dialogue. (Practice: "Who's that (wiggle nose) over there (point with lips)?"

These wonderful gestures which you have mastered so well here today — and will beautifully confuse as soon as you leave this hall — will not do in an English context. They are meaningless here. Puerto Ricans and other Latins must be taught, first of all, to realize they wiggle their noses and point with their lips, since these are actions out of awareness. Next, they have to be taught that these gestures, this kinesics, this non-verbal way of communicating in their culture is non-existent in the Anglo and northern European cultures. Third, they must be taught, that even if they use the gestures — which they will — they must accompany them with words in an

Anglo setting. Anglos should also be taught about this behavior, for they would be learning not just new gestures, but also the liberating truth that there is an incredible and exciting variety among us humans in communicating among ourselves. Moreover, both groups of students would also be learning to switch cultural channels, a skill no one can do without in this world of ours.*

Before finishing my talk, I would like to present to you some observations from the research people in the field that I think are fundamental to our ESL teaching, and which I hope you will take with you into your classrooms and remember specially when you are teaching those very dehydrated dialogues that you will find in most of your textbooks.

Some of the scholars who have done and are doing extensive work in the field of non-verbal communication are Hall, Birdwhistell, Mead, Scheflen, Brier, Green, Cervenka, Rosenthal, and many others. Following are some key messages for you from them, messages all of us should remember, meditate upon, and try to apply in our ESL teaching.

"To focus exclusively upon the words humans interchange is to eliminate much of the communicational process from view, and thus, from purposive control. It is my (Dr. Birdwhistell's) guess that probably no more than 30% to 35% of the social meaning of conversation or an interaction is carried by words." [13] "Still as of today, it is presumed that if both A and B (two speakers) have properly learned their grammar, have good enough dictionaries which they studied adequately, spoke loud enough and were neither of them deaf, and did not become too emotional, communication has taken place."[14] "It seems "natural" to believe that words plus grammar carry meaning in interaction and that all other behavior is either modificatory, expressive of the individual personality differences of the particular participants . . . or just incidental and accidental noise . . . We think our communication as centrally verbal."[15] "Actually, the communication stream can be made up of multiple behavioral patterns existing on different levels. Research is slowly demonstrating that communicating is made up of levels of activity, the verbal being one among many others."[16] There is movement (kinesics), space (proxemics), how you order your activities (temporality), touching (haptics), although very little investigation has been carried out in the olfactory and thermal levels. "Communication upon investigation appears to be a system which makes use of the channels of all of the sensory modalities, a continuous process."[17]

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*For additional contrasts please see pages 27, 29, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39, 44, below.

[13]Birdwhistell, Ray L. *Kinesics and Context*, p. 50.

[14]Id., p. 67.

[15]Id., p. 87.

[16]Id., p. 88.

[17]Id., p. 69.

"We can no more understand communication by exhaustive investigation of language and paralanguage (intonation, stress, juncture) than we can understand physiology by, say, the exhaustive investigation of the circulatory or nervous systems. Physiology as we know it is less than 100 years old. Little by little, we have come to understand the neural processes, then, endocrinology, and the circulation of the blood. However, until the living system as a whole was examined, modern physiology with its complex considerations of homeostasis, balance, organization of its subsystems could not be conceived."[18] We are still about 100 years behind physiology in ESL instruction, I feel. We still believe that communication and social competence is linguistically based. We, in dissecting "the cadáver" of communication and social interchange — and sometimes I feel most of us do not know that there is a body to dissect — we have discovered a system, one: language, and we think that it is all of communication. Well, it is not. There are other systems besides that of language. There are, however, many specialists who have been concerned with these other systems for a long time now: anthropologists, social scientists, and specially psychiatrists. But no English teachers . . . as yet.

There are some additional reminders for us teachers, that I want to pass on to you. Sapir tells us the following: "We respond to gestures with an extreme alertness and . . . in accordance with an elaborate and secret code that is written nowhere, known by none, and understood by all."[19] However, Birdwhistell, supported by Mead and many others, says: "We have found no gesture or body motion which has the same social meaning in all societies. There is no body motion or gesture that can be regarded as a universal symbol. Not even a smile. In fact, the methods of organizing body motion into communicative behavior by various societies may be as variable as the structure of the languages of these societies."[20] "We can say at this moment of our research that body motion does have a structure comparable to that of spoken language. It is very probable that the two systems, kinesics and language, are of comparable weight in the communicational process, relationship between language and motion being very tight. But these structures differ from culture to culture, and even from subgroup to subgroup."[21] In other words, if the markers the patterns of non-verbal levels are culture bound, learned behavior, there is great possibility of confusion when the messages are given in another cultural context or setting. "In the U.S.A., we move and speak American English."[22] In Puerto Rico, we move and speak Puerto Rican Spanish. And "never the twain shall meet."

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[18]Id., p. 74 and 73.

[19]Sapir, Edward. *Language, Culture and Personality*, p. 156. (From *Selected Writings*, ed. David Mandelbaum).

[20]Birdwhistell, R.L. *Op. cit., p. 81*

[21]Id., pages. 187, 189, 255.

[22]Id., p. 150.

In fact, — and a very dramatic one at that — " . . . if the communicational behavior of an individual in our culture is sufficiently unexpected and idiosyncratic as to be beyond the range of our previous experiences, we may be unable to relate to him successfully. We usually tend to lable such behavior as pathological . . ."[23] insane, sick. To our culture bound eyes and senses, people from other cultures behave — so we think — strangely, sick. In other words, what is totally permissible in one culture may be perceived and interpreted as pathological in another.

This last comment explains my worry and concern regarding the present teaching of ESL here in the States, where so many different cultures meet in classrooms across the nation, for up to now our teaching of ESL and our teacher training has completely excluded the kinesic, proxemic, haptic and parakinesic dimensions from them, the areas in cross-cultural communication which contrast dramatically from culture to culture and which may be the source of much misunderstanding, ill-feeling and heartache. The least we can do as ESL and bilingual teachers is to alert our students, both English and non-English speaking, to these very real but up to now disregarded aspects of communication.

I hope I have intrigued, interested and motivated you enough so that the next time you teach a dialogue or you interrelate with Latins or anybody from another culture than your own, you stop to think about many of the things I have brought to your attention today, things that will not appear in the dialogue text (nor was present in the language classes you took long ago) but which should definitely be there. I also hope many of you will become motivated enough to find out what those absent messages are, and start writing out the scripts that are missing, the non-verbal communication information that should accompany all oral interplay in any language teaching.

A lot still needs to be done. The field is new and the scholars admit it. But by reading the materials one can already glean a body of information that is impressive and which can already be applied to the classroom.

In closing, I would like to leave with you certain thoughts from Edward T. Hall from his very famous book, *The Silent Language*, which are most reassuring. "Man did not evolve culture as a means of smothering himself, but as a medium to move, live, breathe, and develop his own uniqueness . . . Full acceptance of the reality of culture would have revolutionary consequences, although in studying it we should expect resistence, for the universe does not yield its secrets easily, and culture is no exception. (However), full understanding of what culture is should rekindle our interest in life, in finding out who we are, in trying to find out who others are."[24] I add, that we as teachers are committed to this activity, that of discovery and insight, the greatest activities in this age of ours of closing in spaces, of shortened distances, of multi-contacts with the many and the different.

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[23]Id., p. 15.

[24]Hall, Edward T. *The Silent Language*, pp. 165-166.

There may come a time in the very near future when culture and all its systems are better known, and we have the equivalent of what someone has called "musical scores" that can be learned by everyone. At this moment the task seems impossible of being carried out. But it has been done before thousands of times in the history of man. One more example: "Time, which is such a well-known system for us, and one we take very much for granted, was once a . . . system known only to a few priests along the Nile River who had perfected it in response to a *need* to forecast annual floods more accurately."[25] There is such a need at present: intercultural understanding, the carrying out of the new enterprise of learning to live together. Together but different. Let's get on with the task.

[25]Id., p. 130.

SMILING

One of the most common gestures in the world is that of the smile. However, it is also one of the most misunderstood facial expressions in cross-cultural relations. Ray Birdwhistell, the well-known researcher in the field of kinesics, believes that the meaning of even a smile is dependent totally on the culture of those using it: "Although we have been searching for fifteen years, we have found no gesture or body motion which has the same social meaning in all societies".[26]

The more I analyze the faces of Puerto Ricans and those of white Anglos and blacks in the U.S.A. the more I subscribe to the above statement of the famous kinesicist. To Puerto Rican eyes, the American face seems extremely immobile, with that of women more so than that of men. Black men also seem to have extremely serious faces by our "smiling" standards, although older black women and white Anglo men seem more ready to return a smile and flash one in conversation than white American women and black men. In the U.S.A., smiling seems to take place in friendly circles only, but very rarely in situations where "serious" activities are being carried out, such as worshiping, teaching, learning, and working. The relaxed, familiar, joking atmosphere of similar activities in the Caribbean is decidedly absent here in the States.

How does the smile function among Puerto Ricans? Friends smile to friends profusely and they touch. But the smile is also used with strangers in asking for information, in addressing clerks, and as a substitute for what the following verbal English patterns express in the United States: "Would you be so kind as to . . . ?" "May (Can) I help you?" "Could you tell me if . . . ?" "Please." "Thank you." "You are welcome." "Hello!" "Hi" "Good morning, etc." In other words, many Puerto Ricans and other Latins would begin many petitions in English without the verbal

[26]Birdwhistell, R.L. *Op. cit.*, p. 81.

preamble, somewhat like this: "Where is Mr. Randolph's office?" with, of course, the smile there. A Puerto Rican clerk or secretary would answer most obligingly, without feeling that the absence of the verbal polite formula implied discourtesy or bluntness. It might be useful to point out that the expression "May I help you?" so commonly heard here in the United States, is usually absent from similar verbal interplay in Puerto Rico and other Latin countries. The clerk or person in charge, the receptionist, the secretary, may in this particular situation simply stare at you, or raise an (or both) eyebrow(s), or smile or give the head a short upward jerky movement to express "May I help you?"

Puerto Rican women acknowledge and greet other women on the street with a smile, even though these women may be total strangers to them. However, in meeting a friend they stop and talk for a while. Acquaintances are either smiled at or waved at with much more feeling than is customary here in the States. In fact, it strikes me as if American culture had not provided for the greeting of acquaintances, and that Americans simply move in a world of friends or strangers with no in-betweens. A Puerto Rican woman is not supposed to acknowledge or smile at male strangers; however, if she should smile back, she is sending a very special message to the man in question, something like "I am willing to pursue this matter further."

Puerto Rican urban men smile much less than rural men, to the point that they seem to me to behave more like American women in large urban centers here, who smile at friends only, but mostly those of the opposite sex. In meeting a male friend, Puerto Rican men smile at each other, but they add the element of touching. They jab or tap their friends' anatomies while they greet or talk. Of course, all Puerto Rican men — urban and rural — are permitted by their culture to smile and "echar piropos" to girls and women who pass by, that is, make verbal and quite audible complimentary remarks, about the females' anatomy. In this, they behave completely at odds with American men. However, the Puerto Rican women are not supposed to smile at the men and their "piropos", although they may relish them and feel quite proud about being the object of same.

The end part of many conversations such as those mentioned above also end with smiles, which often substitute for verbal expressions, particularly for "Thank you". In fact, the word "Thank you" which is ever-present in American speech sounds terribly stand-offish, remote, and formal to Puerto Ricans. The feeling in hearing it is one of discomfort, and possibly of disillusionment at seeing an American friend not behave as a friend, since he insists on behaving in what seems for a Puerto Rican a formal, rejecting style, one which can only mean: "I do not want to be open with you nor accessible." You might say: "But Spanish people are very formal." Yes, but not all of them. We Puerto Ricans do experience this formality as well, when travelling in South America. The Caribbean countries were settled mostly by southern Spaniards and by Spanish people from coastal towns in Spain, and the informality and spontaneity they brought with them and left there contrasts quite markedly with the formality and ceremony of the people of such Latin American cities as Bogotá, México City, San José, La Paz, Lima which were settled mostly by

Castillians. Upon visiting these charming cities, we Caribbeans feel that we are entering 15th or 16th century Spain and meeting courtly people who employ elaborate formulas for greetings and farewells, usually accompanied by the most elegant and theatrical of gestures and body movements, so they seem to us. This, specially among men! We Caribbeans seem to these Latin Americans extremely informal, and sometimes too forward; and so they tell us, although they are honest enough to compare us to their own people from their coastal regions, if they happen to have them, these again, descendants of southern Spaniards and other Spanish coastal settlers. This cultural contrast also follows the two main streams in Latin American Spanish, namely, the Spanish that comes closest to that of Castillians — and which to many is "good" Spanish — like the one spoken in Costa Rica, Bogotá, and Mexico City — versus the Spanish of the Caribbean and coastal regions of Latin America where the aspirated /s/ of southern Spain is still heard, and where the *l* of certain words is substituted by an *r* (balcón/barcón), again a characteristic to this day of the Spanish of southern Spain.

A smile may also have another meaning among Puerto Ricans, namely embarassment, and only the situation and accompanying body movements can throw light as to its meaning. I have seen students of mine who are having difficulty in class smile broadly from ear to ear at an interview with me. They are not being fresh. Their pale skin, fidgety manner and downcast eyes tell me that they are very scared even though they are smiling.

The smile among Puerto Ricans is also used in our polychronic culture as a breaker or interrupter in conversations when you pay at the cashier of restaurants and stores, or as you ask, with the smile, for permission to pass. I have noticed this mostly among Puerto Rican women. Men, however, may use more words and courtesy formulas, such as "Permiso." "Perdone Ud," "Con el permiso."

These are real contrasts, but our text-book dialogues do not show them. Latins from the Caribbean, and particularly Puerto Ricans, must be made aware of these differences in learning ESL, since their smile, a *visual* gesture, is not too good a substitute for the *oral* courtesy formulas which are used in most interpersonal relations in the English-speaking world. They have to be taught not to stop smiling; — the world would be sadder and grayer for it — but to learn and use the English words. On the other hand, learners of SSL — Spanish as a second language — may have to learn to produce visual gestures — smiles, and even winks - as substitutes for their "Thank you." "You're welcome." "May I see you?" "Please." "Hi!" when interacting with Spanish-speaking peoples, so as not to sound and seem too formal or aloof.

STARING AND EYE CONTACT

The field of occulisics studies how you use your eyes in interpersonal relationships. Here again we find another area of contrast between Anglo and Latin

cultures. When walking in the streets of large cities in the States, such as New York City, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago and others, I have always experienced a feeling of great isolation, particularly if I have been away from the States for a long period of time. The feeling also accompanies me everywhere I go. Moreover, I have caught myself trying to smile at women as I move around. In a one to one relationship, that is, in talking to my American friends, I have also noticed that my neck muscles feel extremely uncomfortable, sometimes to the point of cramps, and I notice that these friends stare closely into my eyes as they talk to me as if looking for a speck of something there, so it seems to me. If they are not smiling — and most are not - I also catch myself wondering whether they are angry at me. Again, feelings of discomfort on my part. I have felt this way whenever I change abruptly from my own culture to that of the United States, particularly that of the big urban centers.

It seems that Puerto Rican women stare and smile at each other on the streets in passing. This, of course, is very marked in all our towns, but it is still observable in San Juan. I have also seen it happen in New York City, in the Puerto Rican "Barrio". Women, however, are not supposed to smile at men, although they certainly look them over from the corner of their eyes. Nevertheless, men all over the Hispanic world are allowed by their culture to stare at women to their hearts' content* and smile at them as they pass, usually accompanying stare and smile with a "piropo", a flowery and poetic statement regarding their anatomy, or their future plans regarding them. Here are some such "piropos": "Adiós, guapa." (Hello, handsome). "San Pedro dejó las puertas del cielo abiertas y se le escapó un angel." (Saint Peter left the gates of heaven open, and one of the angels escaped). "Ahí va la madre de mis hijos." (There goes the future mother of my children). Women are not supposed to say or do anything, not even smile, for that sends the message of "I am available", which American tourist girls do not know they are sending when they graciously acknowledge such compliments and even stop to start a conversation with the men.

It seems that staring and eye contact among Americans is not permissible for either sex either in public places (streets, schools, banks, restaurants, offices, shops, churches) or private places (homes, parties); but it is a must in talking to someone. This is so much so that many a Latin feels completely out of everything here in the States, but cramped up in personal conversations; for the opposite holds true in most Latin countries: you stare at passing folks but do not establish prolongued eye contact with those you are talking with. However, while you listen, you must look intently at the person who is talking to you or else, you seem not to be interested in what is being said to you. As soon as you begin talking, on the other hand, your eyes begin to wander, — much more so than when Anglos talk — although there is always a brief moment when the person who is speaking establishes eye contact, followed immediately by more eye wanderings. The steady look an Anglo speaker bestows on Latin folks while he speaks to them, following his cultural custom, makes

*Latin men may *stare* at women while Anglo men should not, so each culture says. Nonetheless, Anglo men may *touch* women, while Latin men cannot. Another instance of cultural reversal within the two cultures.

Latins feel uneasy. It seems this prolongued look among Latins of different sex is only reserved for courting or angry inter-change of words. In this last interaction, the steady look and the words accompanying it are definitely angry, and not soft and caressing as in courting. Of course, if people of the same sex stare at each other long and steadily while talking, they are sending each other a homosexual message. However, this is taboo behavior in Latin cultures, and the uneasiness is great when encountered in another culture, even though there the message is definitely not the same, I believe.

A steady stare accompanied by raised eye-brows also takes you back to childhood days when spine-chilling angry looks were directed your way when you spilled the "unspillable" or tore up precious books or magazines some grown up was saving up or had not read as yet. Then, you lowered your eyes, and wanted to run, which is exactly the overwhelming feeling you get when bright Anglo eyes (and Irish, too) look upon you steadily as serious and incredibly immobile faces . . . as is seen particularly among Anglo women . . . "talk" to you.

I believe the contrast can also be explained by referring it to the monochronic and polychronic styles of the two cultures. Americans, due to their monochronic way of interrelating with each other, have a range of vision which could be compared to a tunnel — tunnel vision — while Latins, because of their polychronic style of interrelating with one another have acquired a fan-shaped range of vision. The interesting thing is that this also seems to affect auditory perception, and here as well Americans seem auditorily monochronic — they hear only one person at a time — while Latins seem auditorily polychronic — they can switch their auditory perception to hear more than one person at a time. The range of visual perception of Latins, then, seems to be wider than that of Anglos, possibly as a cultural reinforcement of their polychronic style of interrelating with others which compel them to acknowledge on sight by stare or smile any friend or recent acquaintance who comes within a range of three or five or even ten feet from them. Of course, this is done in order — so the culture says — not to offend or reject the approaching friend or acquaintance, or so as not to give the impression of snobbishness. This is the message sent in a Latin culture if you do not acknowledge a person you know.

From the above we can then realize that the neck muscles also move differently in both cultures. Americans with their tunnel-vision and monochronic style seem stiff-necked to Latins, while Latins, with their fan-shaped vision and polychronic style seem to have rubber necks which cannot and will not keep still. I am sure they also seem inattentive and uninterested to Americans, and oftentimes rude, for the customary intense American eye contact in a one to one conversation is hard for Latins to establish as explained above.

The above does not mean that the quality of interpersonal relationships in the Anglo world is inferior to that of the Latin world. What is being said here is that our own individual culture decides for us *when* and *how* to establish them. Because of the possibility of deep and painful misunderstanding among Latins and Americans regarding this point, we should teach these differences to our students (or at least

point them out to our charges). Since the means of expressing respect, friendship, and warmth are different in both cultures, the wrong messages may be sent and tremendous havoc brought about in our interpersonal relationships. Actually, I have caught myself stating that Anglo culture was impersonal in its ways vis a vis Latin culture. This is not so. It is simply different.

If we are teachers of children from Latin backgrounds, we should remember some of the above. Your students will expect you to acknowledge them in the halls, in the parking lot, everywhere. They will see and look at you. What they do not know is that your cultural monochronic "tunnel" — if you are an Anglo — is hindering you from seeing them. I think it would be a good idea to start practicing some polychronic neck and eye movements in order to interrelate better with our educational charges if they are Latins. "¿No cree Usted?" (Don't you think?).

SILENCE VS. NOISE

Whenever I come to the United States, I receive what I call the "silence" treatment. Possibly because of the weather and the closed in apartments and places everything seems quiet, calm, and sometimes eerily silent. Besides the silence, there is also an impression of empty spaces, empty streets, empty halls, empty offices, empty parks and campuses. That is the impression a Latin gets regarding many of the activities in this country. What is the impression an Anglo gets in a Latin country? NOISE! And people, people, people everywhere, always talking and giggling and joking. "Don't these Latins ever keep quiet, ever work?" says an Anglo. A Latin may retort: "Don't Anglos ever smile or do anything else but work?"

Once again we have two different attitudes and styles, one which says that one lives in order to work — the Puritan work-ethic — and another which says that one works in order to live. Of course, nothing one ever says about culture is that specific and definite, but these two different styles are there: one culture definitely seems to the other too noisy and too relaxed about work, while the other culture seems too serious and silent, and rather uptight about work. Again, a very important difference, and one which would be profitable to discuss and talk about with our students, and which could very well throw light on living styles other than the one we have been taught by our native culture.

However, we must be very much aware of the fact that culture is a very demanding "Jefe" (boss), and will and can control us no matter how much we "understand" and try to adapt. Both foreign students and ourselves will behave according to our home culture automatically, completely out-of-awareness, with our

whole beings responding to the many and hidden demands of our own culture. Let me explain this point further with an example: when I come here to the United States from Puerto Rico, I find that if I work in a very "silent" place, my output diminishes. I start feeling uneasy, nervous, and quite unwilling to work. Without my being aware, an onslaught of "anomie", of culture shock has set in. However, when I work surrounded by chatting Puerto Ricans I become completely immersed in my work and can and do work for hours on end. In other words, switching cultural channels is difficult, and learning and accepting alternative styles may take a long, long time; and so with Latins and Americans and their attitudes toward work and silence.

Apparently Latins need the presence of human noises to feel at ease; they need spaces filled with talk and human bodies. Otherwise, they may become depressed and their creative performance may diminish. It seems the presence of others charge their vital energies. A Latin must have "tertulias" — talking gatherings — at street corners, in balconies, at clubs, on the street, in order to feel right. Anglos don't. They need silence to recharge their own vital forces and energies. They need to be and feel alone.

The "tertulia" syndrome cuts again through all social gatherings and situations in polychronic style. Groups of men, in a circle arrangement, whether standing or sitting, talk, laugh, kid, and drink; and talk, laugh and drink some more, everywhere. Women, in a separate circle, do the same, although drinking is a late addition to women "tertulias". A one to one conversation is rare, for everyone seems to want to share and experience the joy of listening to and talking about and contributing a witty comment, a joke and gossip, a tall tale or real experience. Everybody wants to live the excitement of being with other humans whether they behave at their best or worst. This happens all the time, everywhere.

Again, these things have to be talked about and discussed with our students. They must develop feelings of tolerance and respect for the manifold ways in which human beings go about at arriving at the same things, namely, enjoyment, creativity, relaxation, and the replenishing of their sense of personal integrity and unity.

CLOTHES

I will forever remember the irate American professor at the university of Puerto Rico who complained to me about his Puerto Rican students as "bourgeois adolescents whose only worry was how their clothes looked." Apparently he had made the same statement to his students with good old American frankness, and judging from my own reaction to his words, he must have gotten some very negative feedback from the students. He left Puerto Rico at the end of that term.

Actually, I wish we Puerto Ricans worried less about the way we look. It would probably be more profitable and enriching to spend some of the money and time we spend on clothes on other things such as books and works of charity. However, the truth is that we don't, and that this attitude regarding clothes is a very strong one in our culture, one very closely tied to our value system. A Puerto Rican would rather die than be seen in dirty or torn clothes not only in public places but at home as well. Not only is dirt on clothes unacceptable but everything else is watched for carefully: seams are not to unravel, hems are kept in place, lost buttons are rapidly replaced, matching of colors is carefully observed. Even though no formal lessons on personal grooming are given anywhere, everyone learns the elaborate dressing rules our culture teaches all her children, and everybody follows them closely.

Again, this is another source of misunderstanding between both Puerto Ricans and Americans, for the Americans are not as uptight about clothes as we Puerto Ricans are; and we are quite uptight about them. You see, they express too many valuable things in our culture. A dirty and unkept Puerto Rican is a sick Puerto Rican, at least in Puerto Rico. He is unconsciously saying, "I feel most unhappy about myself, and I cannot do much about it." If he is not sick and he comes to your party or to teach you in dirty and unkempt clothes, he is being outright and consciously offensive and hostile. His message is one of "I do not respect you and I don't give a . . . about you." In other words, the way a Puerto Rican dresses sends definite messages of feelings towards himself and those around him.

Although in the United States much of the above is also true regarding clothes and the messages they send, the fact is that more informality in dressing is permitted here than in Puerto Rico. Here, half naked bodies parade the streets in the summer in raveled clothing and disheveled hair, and nothing happens. Such a person would be picked up by the police at home in minutes. Girls show a lot up here, and no man dares to shout a comment or touch. At home, if that much leg and breast and torso exposure were seen, a riot would ensue and the girls would really have to run. With the new fashions, girls are showing more and more of their bodies there, but there is always negative reactions and comments both from peers and authority figures. It takes a very decided girl to retain and show off her nudity in spite of the pressures around her to have her cover it.

By tropical and American standards we are an over-dressed people. However, I see this changing very little, and we seem to continue to "over dress" in spite of 80° and 90° temperatures throughout the year. Because, you see, to do differently would mean to us many, many things, such as lack of modesty, lack of finesse, lack of consideration for others, lack of refinement, and lack of feelings of self-worth. These are some of the meanings that our way of dressing has for Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico, a set of meanings too rich and important to be destroyed for the mere freedom of exposing our bodies more and for comfort's sake. The enjoyment of more physical comfort would soon be completely outweighed by the mental discomfort the changes would occasion; that is, as of 1975.

This is another area of cultural contrast worth discussing with our Latin and non-Latin students. I do not believe it possible that in an ESL class of this day and age, a Latin student would still openly criticize a very intelligent and capable American teacher of hers as "disrespectful" and "no good" simply because of her manner of dressing; but it did happen recently. The way this particular student put it to me was, "Look at that! No person who respects herself would come to school dressed like she does. She is no good. What kind of a professional is that? Would you dress like that? A hippie!" No one had discussed with this long-time resident of New York City that culture prescribes many things and among them styles of dressing and what we communicate through them; and that this particular American lady and professor was not being at all disrespectful to them in the way she dressed, for from her cultural vantage point, she was acting respectfully and well. If the teacher had been a Latin woman, it would have been a completely different story, and the student would have been right. No one had told this student anything about this delicate and explosive matter. Somebody should have.

MONEY MATTERS

In the very perilous but important territory of culture where "money matters" are handled, we again find another source of conflict between the Anglo and Latin cultures. I always remember the time when I read in a Spanish college textbook that Latin America was the land where money was not the ruler, implying that money was not as important there as it was in the United States. I remember that I wondered about the statement then, and sort of questioned the same; for I saw around me extreme interest in money as evidenced in family feuds and schisms, in actual deaths because of money matters and property. I remembered the many deaths that had taken place at the "guardarraya" (property demarcation) in many Puerto Rican farms; and I also remembered how many brothers and sisters and other relatives I knew were not talking to one another because of that particular clause on some relative's will. The above mentioned statement was probably written by someone who had experienced something about money in the Latin culture which gave him the impression of lack of interest in it, while all the time he was experiencing something else. He was experiencing cultural differences in the handling of money matters which, however, do not mean a lack of interest in what gets you your clothes and sustenance.

What are these differences? These differences are apparently based on the culture's promotion of reticence as well as the showing of largesse, generosity and hospitality for visitors and those who are "above" you. Whatever the reasons for these styles, with roots buried in a long agricultural past several thousands of years old, some of the money practices in Latin cultures seem to be the following. If you lend small change to anyone — from pennies to a dollar or even two — you do not expect that money back, and the person who borrows it knows he is not supposed to return

that money back. The same with small things. You may borrow a stamp, an envelope, but you are not to return a stamp and an envelope. If you do, you apparently express something insulting to the person who made the loan. A person usually feels you are calling him/her a cheapstake, stingy, and overly interested in money matters; and they react accordingly, that is, hurt and angry. And that is bad! I will always remember a colleague of mine who happened to be a very rich Puerto Rican girl, and who arranged a private session with me in order to ask me to clarify my insulting attitude for I had already told her several times that week that I was going to return $10.00 she had lent a student group for a picnic, as soon as possible. What had bothered her beyond measure was that I kept reminding her she was going to be paid soon, thus making her seem overly aware of such a "poorly" debt of $10.00. "Judy", she said quite hurt, "I am not money-minded. I wish you would stop being so American about all this." And on and on. I understood I had hurt her, and got my cultural lesson through pain; but it was not until now that I have really understood what were some of the deep and intricate cultural compulsions that were functioning within her then. Another friend, an American, once tried to return 25¢ to me, and my reaction was just as violent as that of my friend's. I put my feelings into words thus: "Look, I do not need that money and I will not starve if I don't have that quarter." Again, my culture had taught me to consider offensive giving an impression of being interested in small change, in money in general, and in possessions, and had also taught me how to react: hurt and angry. But, you *do* have to return . . . something . . ., and the culture also tells you when to do it. However, in Latin American cultures you take your time and never seem overly hurried about doing it. Again, so as not to give offense.

There is a phrase in the language that expresses what has to be done, and the fact that one is expected by one's culture to be on the "giving" line as well as on the "receiving" line. The phrase is "Le estoy obligado; le estoy en deuda por sus muchas atenciones." (I am indebted to him/her for his/her many thoughtful acts.) And your soul is indeed indebted. The culture has taught its people that borrowing without returning is taboo. There is no worse feeling than that of being "en deuda" (in debt) with someone and not being able to do something for or give something to the person to clear matters. Little and big favors are always being done to erase your debts: small dishes of food are always being sent back and forth among neighbors, friends and relatives. "No es bueno llegar con las manos vacías." (It is not good to arrive empty-handed.) "Hoy por tí; mañana por mí." (Today I do this for you; tomorrow, you will do something for me.) Modern Christmas has become a good occasion for cleaning up your slate of unpaid favors, "atenciones", thoughtful acts with small or large gifts. But never money gifts, particularly to peers. Tipping someone with money, if he/she is a peer is insulting. Even doing it to those "below" you requires tact and "sweet" talk. Of course, tipping is already customary at restaurants, airports, etc. There is more to it, however. Sometimes sitting it out overnight with a friend or relative at a daughter's or wife's sickbed may clear up the debt slate leaving you a creditor for a long time to come. "So and so is so good and generous he/she deserves everything from me." In other words, "I will forever be in debt to him/her for his/her kindness."

We are simply talking about humanity's sense of what is just and right; and humanity's sense of justice and charitv is always very finely balanced, for it is closely tied with man's sense of integrity and with feelings of human solidarity. Love has to show itself in works; otherwise it becomes St. Paul's "sounding brass". And humanity has known this all along. Latins are just as human as everybody else, and neither charity nor justice can be strained among them anymore than it can be strained anywhere else in the world.

Likewise, Americans also worry about the fine balance of justice and charity in human relationships, just as much as Latins and other peoples do; but in these matters as in many others, they have a different cultural code and way of behaving: their cultural code of justice regarding money matters – also unconsciously followed like that of Latin's – tells them that they must return the exact thing borrowed, and they should do so immediately. An American friend once said to me, "I would walk ten miles to return those ten cents I borrowed from you, Judy, if I had to." She was still very American even though she had been married to a Puerto Rican and had lived on the Island for over thirty years. I am sure she was still getting hurt by the Puerto Ricans' "injustice" to her – from her still vital American standards – when they did not walk ten miles to return those ten cents. In fact, they would not have dreamed of returning them for fear of hurting her feelings!

Our Latin students must be informed of this source of misunderstanding between the two cultures. If this point is taught through role-playing and acting out dialogues, it would get across well without threatening their own identity.

American students should also be told about the cultural practices of Latins regarding money matters, and I am sure they would be most grateful for such valuable piece of information. Latins are permitted by their culture to ask a "peer", a friend, relatives how much they paid for a house, a car, a dress, a suit, anything. This is not so in the United States where it is a cultural mistake, a sign of bad manners to do that. I have seen American friends try very hard to switch cultural channels with me on this matter, and they have succeeded, although it was a very hard switch to make. I have also succeeded in doing it. Kindness and understanding are still very powerful forces in all human beings, and they can certainly help our wills to switch cultural channels in spite of the enormous effort needed in going against well-ingrained cultural patterns.

We cannot continue to live our lives among others, particularly among people from other ethnic backgrounds, always worried about being hurt and hurting others, always in a resentful and rejecting mood. We must try hard to learn to switch cultural channels at the same time we retain our cultural styles among our own. We may finally come to feel that we are not living among "strangers" but among people just like ourselves.

LAUGHTER AND PLAY

To most Latins the purpose of most Anglo gatherings seems to be talk, talk, TALK! Laughter and joking are heard, but by Latin standards they seem quite subdued, and they seem to Latins to be constantly turned on and off with the gatherings never attaining the continuum of gaiety and frolicking that Latin ones have. How do the gyrating, kidding "Laugh-tinos" (word coined by a young American girl — Jeannie Ebel — in desperation at a group of noisy Latins who did not let her sleep) look to many a sedate Anglo? Well, they seem immature and childish, irresponsible adults carrying on like teen-agers, when they should know better. Another area of contrast, and an important one.

Gatherings in the Caribbean are called "reunioncitas" (little gatherings), "fiestecitas" (little parties), "pachangas" (happy dancing), "pasaratos" (spending the moment with joy), "relajos" (uproarious kidding), and they sprout everywhere: at a home visit, at picnics, at Christmas parties, at birthday and baptismal parties — which in passing, are parties for grown ups *and* children as well. Not only is there laughter and kidding and horseplay, but a guitar is sure to appear and groups or solo singing ensues, with dancing later on after everybody gets tired of singing the old time "boleros", "guarachas", and "danzas". Then the "merengue", "salsa", "boleros" and "guarachas" fill the house, the street and the beach while bodies move, undulate, shake, and wiggle.

The hurried and harried life of countries who have just arrived to the industrial scene has made of some of our Latin countries a little too tired to play as was customary some generations ago. But most of the above is still alive and well. The long period of celebrations at Christmas time is very present in industrialized Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Santo Domingo, no matter the GNP, and it is an unabashed season for "pachangear". Actually, it takes a whole year to recuperate from it.

People from the Caribbean and other frolicking Latin countries — not all are this way — should be told that the ways of most Americans in this cultural area are quite different from theirs. Latins should be told that their dancing, their singing, their partying is an inheritance from very permissive and artistic peoples who gave free rein to the movement of the body — witness Arabic belly dancing — to interpreting everything through songs, to loud laughing and joking. But these cultures had very little influence in shaping American ways. Americans were in the most part fashioned and culturally brought forth by Puritanism which frowns upon too much wiggling and moving of body parts,* too frank an expression of emotions whether in talk or song, and too loud anything. On the other hand, American Puritanism extols hard work, efficiency, excellence, competition, success.

*Different cultures handle the human trunk differently. (USA) Americans handle the trunk as one unit keeping it "in a rigid or block like manner" while Latins — mostly those from the Caribbean — handle the trunk as if it were several units, with "the pelvis, . . . chest, and shoulders . . . (moving) . . . with separate and clear articulation". (A. Lomax, I. Bartenieff, I. Paulay, "Choreometrics: A Method for the Study of Cross-Cultural Pattern in Film," *Research Film*, Dept. of Anthropology, Columbia University, N. Y. *1969*.)

American Puritanism and its child the American work-ethic are under severe attack from the Americans themselves, however. Young and not so young Americans are trying very hard to add some of what we could call the "Latin" touch to their lives. American theologians and philosophers are adding their contribution to the effort, and we hear the following from one of them: "As the German poet Schiller put it: Man is only fully man when he plays".* "Some theologians argue that adult man is only free to play when he becomes aware that God loves him for his own sake and *not for what he does*." This change in attitude will take time, for Americans still feel very guilty about work. "The average American feels very guilty when he is unemployed or on vacation. Perhaps for a day or two, he regards his leisure of value because it is necessary in order to prepare him for a return to work with renewed enthusiasm. But any leisure beyond what is strictly necessary produces deepseated feelings of uselessness, guilt and self-condemnation."

What can Latins do about the above? First of all, they should show understanding regarding the American attitudes towards themselves at work and play. Second, they should very decidedly hold on to their tradition regarding work and play.

On the other hand, if Latins want to work in this country, they should carefully and conscientiously try to be very punctual, very concerned with excellence, and keen on efficiency. This does not mean, however, they have to give up their joy and gaiety. I think many of the work situations in this country could very well do with a touch of happiness and human concern in them. In fact, joy and kindness and warmth can be projected into all our work. We are all children of God, and the joy this realization should give us should definitely show everywhere, particularly in our work, for it then would become play.

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*John J. McNeill, S. J. "The Philosophy of Play." *Catholic Mind*, February, 1972 (pages 25, 26, 21).

FRANKNESS vs. RETICENCE

In the simple act of offering drink and food to persons, we find another area of contrast between Anglo and Latin cultures. Although this contrast and exchange involves language, I am including it here because it is another source of confusion and stress in cross-cultural and interpersonal relationships.

The good old American regard for a straightforward *yes* or *no* or plain answer clashes here with a culture where diffidence and stalling are considered

virtues, and where prudence in committing oneself and constant regard for the other person's feelings manifest themselves in never letting you say or do anything that may make you seem forward, pushy, rude, offensive or unpleasant to anybody, specially to those who are considered authority figures. Siblings of similar age seem to be the only ones in the culture who can be frank with one another; but if the age ranges are too wide, then the older ones immediately assume the role of authority figures, and they are not to be responded to, they are not to be offended and they are always to be respected. The family, then, sets the patterns for relationships with other people not in the family. Peers may develop deep friendship, "como hermanos" (as brothers and sisters), with a great deal of frankness being exercised among them. They may fight and talk loud to each other, and will forever share things completely.

Property in the family is considered just that: the family's. It takes tremendous self-assertion to retain things whether money or sometimes pieces of clothing for just yourself. This tendency for sharing is also manifested towards people who are not members of the family, particularly those who approach it as visitors or as authority figures in the community. If a visitor compliments anything in your house that can be carried away in his/her hand, and sometimes even larger pieces of furniture and the like, or makes the unwitting statement of "I wish I could get one like it," he might find him/herself offered the admired object, whether a vase, a ring, a necklace, or even a rocker, and definitely forced into accepting it.

Let us now comment on "offering" and "accepting" styles in both cultures.

If a Puerto Rican is offered something to eat or drink, or a snack or a small gift, his/her first culturally learned reaction is to say "No." The person making the offer will not accept the first "No", and will insist. A second "No" follows, and this in turn ellicits more insisting, until the recipient of the offer has said "No" three or four times. This interplay involves complex dialogues where endearing terms ("negrito, lindo, bello") are said plus touching, plus refusals, plus smilings and soft-toned "Ay, bendito" ("Oh, pity, pity".) Finally, the person being offered something caps his fourth "No" with "Well, since you insist, I'll have some." But the deprecating continues to the point that no "Thank you" or "How kind of you" is heard. Here in the States, I have been left without something I would have liked to have had, as I proceeded with my series of "No's" in answer to an offer. I soon learned to switch cultural channels and say a prompt "Yes" if I really wanted a second helping of a particular dish or a much desired lift on a cold night after a meeting. For my first "No" was always taken to mean a final "ho", and that was that. Of course, if you do *not* want something, your going past "No" #4 and on sends the message.

Let me also comment here on another example of reticence in my culture. The Puerto Rican prudence in never asking for favors has to disappear here in the Anglo culture when dealing with Anglos. Here, it is you who initiate a request and petitions at social gatherings and elsewhere while in our Puerto Rican culture and in many other Latin countries, guardian angels in the guise of watchful hostesses, grandmothers, mothers, sisters and aunts have been trained by their culture to

anticipate, sense and express in words everybody's needs. It never fails. Eyes, very sensitive eyes, take in your every move, your message-laden twitches or sighs, and these forever seem to be perceived correctly, for your needs are correctly interpreted and met. Dads, uncles are also aware. But they refer your needs to the women-folk who take care of them, except that of mixing a second or third or more drink for the men. That's a man's job.

Together with the lack of the acknowledging stare and smile, this perception of needs in the monochronic Anglo culture has not been developed to the degree it has in the Puerto Rican and other Latin cultures. Puerto Ricans and other Latins must learn to switch cultural channels, in this area, and act in a way that may seem too forward, pushy, even rude to them; however, such behavior is called in American culture by "good" names, namely, "straightforward", "direct", "resourceful", "self-assertive" and "independent". In other words, Puerto Ricans and other Latins living here in the States would be experiencing something quite radically different from what they are used to at home, but something quite important, for possibly their survival plain and simple depends on just such an ability to switch cultural channels. I am sure dialogues could be written both in English and Spanish and discussed with our students to illustrate the differences in attitude between Latins and Americans in this area. In learning Spanish dialogues, it would be most revealing for Americans to try to use some reticence, some stalling, and less aggressive verbal interchange with others. Possibly, they would be frightened to death to have to give a series of "No's" before accepting an offer for fear they might be taken literally.

Learning to be frank might take a little longer for Puerto Ricans than learning to say *Yes* quickly. But learning "frankness" and "directness" is a must in this country. Latins should be informed quite clearly that most Americans do not take offense nor consider it a personal affront for you to criticize directly what they have said or done. In fact, it has been quite a revealing experience for me this year to see how most of the people I have talked to about non-verbal communication and other topics are quite willing and most of the time very anxious to listen to and learn about new things without striking a defensive pose. There are always "strange" ones, but the majority of the people I have met at my lectures have been extremely open and receptive; and I have talked quite frankly and to the point.

Many Latins, both men and women, have to learn to stand their ground in this country, they must learn not to walk away during an argument even if there is shouting from a superior or inferior. They must stick it out and argue and learn to raise their voices to others. Here it is acceptable practically everywhere. Americans must also be informed that it is hard for many Latins to break away from feelings of disrespect if they rebuke or rebutt people who according to their culture, are authority figures, such as professors, teachers, doctors, policemen, managers; and it might be a good thing for Anglos to help them out by puncturing the silence that says "No comment for I might be offensive", by edging them on and assuring them that you as an Anglo will not take offense at their comments nor take it as a personal affront if they dare to dissent or criticize. It is in situations such as these where the loud-speaking, chatter-box of a Latin will suddenly shut himself off in total silence.

This same behavior comes out when a Puerto Rican is scolded or rebuked by superiors, such as priests, bosses, managers, owners of stores, or teachers. A simple clerk might get it straight in the eye, and a surly secretary or cash-register attendant or laborer will find him/herself squelched out of recognition if he/she dares to rebuke, scold or snap at a Puerto Rican and other Latins. These last are considered "inferiors" in Latin American cultures, and there is no saving power for them if they dare to step out of verbal and non-verbal bounds according to Latin culture. Quite different in the United States! Quite different! Here, I have witnessed secretaries take to task their bosses and distinguished professors at famous Universities and I have seen them treated with a deference and a profusion of "Excuse me's", "Thank you's", "If you are so kind as to . . ." which Latins would definitely save for their Bishops and their Presidents only.

Again, two cultures behaving completely at odds. A Latin must definitely learn to speak out to his "superiors" here in the States, to his professors, to his boss, to his doctor, to the owners of stores, in a decided and firm tone of voice without feeling he is being offensive and without taking offense if these people snap at him. Moreover, he also has to learn to accept the snappy talk and verbal impatience of elevator operators, sales clerks, sercetaries, beauticians, newspaper vendors, barbers, drivers — his "inferiors" in his own culture — in his stride or learn to snap back, but never punch them in the nose or say to them "Tu madre" ("Your mother"). The former might take him to jail while the latter would be an entirely meaningless offense here in the States. He could learn effective English verbal insults, but he should keep their use to a minimum, for he is indeed in a foreign land although a citizen of it.

I sincerely hope that some Puerto Ricans learn a very important lesson from their stay in this country, namely, that those who in Puerto Rico may have been considered as "inferiors" in other words, those who very condescendingly were called "los humildes", these are the ones who, in a way, are running this land. No "humilde" from Puerto Rico needs to accept any ill-treatment from anyone here for in this country you are authorized by its culture to put everybody in his place.

However, the act of learning to be assertive will require another adjustment from the Puerto Rican woman, particularly those coming from the middle and upper classes. This switch will go hard against their cultural grain, for Puerto Rican women have been taught by their culture that in responding, in asking questions, in complaining, even in arguing with others they must do so in a soft-toned voice. This is not just Puerto Ricans alone; I have observed and heard this soft tone among other Latin American women, such as Dominicans, Peruvians, Ecuatorians, and Mexicans. However, in the United States, particularly in the urban centers, women are oftentimes heard expressing themselves in high pitched voices, anxiety and anger laden; and it is totally acceptable. American men seem to me, however, to behave more like Puerto Rican women while the American women seem to me to behave in this matter of tone of voice more like the Latin man, who is permitted to raise his voice in an argument, scream at the top of his voice, no matter whether he is from the city or from the hills. In fact, most Puerto Rican women from the hills, our "jíbaritas",

also compete with and outdo the men with their loud and energetic tones of voices. In fact, no city girl can produce or even imitate our country music which requires a nasality and a high pitch that only a "jíbarita" – or a "jíbarito" for that matter – can put forth.

So, in learning to talk back, something that will always be hard for a middle and upper class Puerto Rican woman from the city, they should learn something of the frankness and vigor of tone of our Puerto Rican "jíbara". This is an asset in the urban centers of the United States where you are expected not to let yourself be pushed around and where if you do not speak out you will be trampled on.

Once again, I recommend role-playing and the practice of writing and the memorizing of dialogues – cross-cultural ones – for the learning of the above. It would be quite an experience for some double-barreled voiced Anglo woman to learn some of the softness required of them in the Caribbean culture, particularly in Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, some regions of Cuba and Mexico. In Havana, Buenos Aires and Santiago, Chile, the women behave very much like the American women of large cities in the States regarding tone of voice. This, of course, has caused some friction in the relationships between Puerto Rican women and Cuban, Argentinian, and Chilean women. To the former the latter seem too loud, too aggressive, too pushy and over-bearing. To the latter, we Puerto Rican women seem too elusive, too uncommitted, too docile, too accomodating and prudent. Again, a very serious source of friction, and this right within the "same" culture.

This, together with other contrasts that may create cross-cultural friction and misunderstanding, can be resolved with furious switching of cultural channels. And this we can do once we know that these behaviors are culturally determined, and that they do not necessarily reflect lack of an understanding heart nor the absence of a sensitive and loyal soul, which can very easily be hiding behind a non-smiling face and a harsh tone of speech just as well as behind a smiling face and soft voice. We must teach our students to learn to go beyond culturally learned signs and actions in reaching out for the real person; and surprises will be in store for them and innumerable friendships, besides the excitement of attaining freedom from the hidden control of one's own culture, one of man's real freedoms, which will allow them to live a happier and fuller life being whatever they are, plus being able to accept and love God's other children.

GREETINGS, FAREWELLS AND INTERRUPTIONS

Last year, at two TESOL Conventions, one in Syracuse and the other in Los Angeles, I stated that dialogues for "greetings" and "farewells" in any culture were very complex activities non-verbally speaking. (Page 22 above). I never realized, however, how very complex they really were until I began analyzing them. In fact, it became more and more complex as I went along, until several subdivisions emerged. I want to share these with you. I feel most ESL and foreign language teachers will welcome them, for they indicate what actually takes place in a dialogue situation.

I am also including here examples of polychronism (taking care of more than one thing or person at a time), and how interruptions are handled in such situations among Hispanics. Teachers will then be able to role-play them with their Spanish-speaking students, and will then be able to take them afterwards to the oftentimes contrasting activities which take place in similar situations in the Anglo culture. Very young children will pick up the new actions very fast, without having to point out the existent contrasts, for they are still at the imitation stage. However, adults (from puberty on) resent and will not accept anything new unless presented in an unthreatening fashion. The introduction of new and culturally different content to a student through his culture will make him feel respected, since whatever recognition is shown to manifestations of his particular culture — language, NVC (non-verbal communication), food, literature — is a sign of respect shown to his person as well. After having begun with what is known by the students and is acceptable to them, teachers can then proceed to introduce new cultural information, the not-so-acceptable content, even the not-too-well-liked or understood behavior in the foreign culture and language their students are trying to and have to learn.

I would have liked to have included more dialogues and role-playing, but I feel teachers can use those that follow as models for others they themselves would like to produce. Furthermore, the techniques suggested here for teaching dialogues and for role-playing are a few among many others . . . most of them unknown to most of us as of today. These will have to be developed by interested, devoted, and creative teachers who believe that all that has been said above should be learned by all our children, both Anglo and others, many of whom are very confused and frustrated members of our multicultural United States and world.

I wish these teachers of vision and generosity all the luck in the world. Thanks for being there!

I. GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS

A. Among Children and Adults (Puerto Rico)

No formal dialogue takes place between grown-ups and children when they meet, whether these are relatives, friends, acquaintances or not. The children usually look very briefly at the adult, lower their eyes, and step forward to be kissed while the adult approaches, touches them, kisses, pats, and pets them. Children will let themselves be kissed or kiss in turn, but they will not utter a single word of greeting. Some hide shamelessly from the newcomer in mama's skirts . . . . . her pants, at present. The expression "¡Qué jíbaro!" ("How shy you are!") may be said by one or both of the parents. Actually, the word "jíbaro" is the name given in Puerto Rico to the people from the Puerto Rican hills, the country-folk. Little by little, however, it has been extended to mean overly "shy", "reticent", a "scary cat". Parents may also add, "El gato le llevó la lengua". (The cat took his tongue away) as an apology for the lack of verbal communication coming from the children and sometimes his frantic refusal to greet the newcomer in the acceptable cultural style.

The adult will oftentimes ask the parents to let her hold the children in her arms, if the children are very young — one or two years of age, or if they are babies. This is very flattering to the parents. Mothers with very young children offer them over to friends they meet so they will be held by them for a short while, particularly by women friends. Men seldom hold children, however, even their own, although this seems to be changing among those Puerto Rican and Latin men who have become liberated, that is, men who do not feel ashamed any longer of doing things for their children, their wives, their homes. But these are still quite scarce.

I. GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS

B. Among women (Puerto Rico)

1. Similar ages. 2. Approximate or same social status (class), profession.

I. STRANGERS	VS*	NVS**	Comments
Woman Woman	_____ _____	1. Do not stop to talk. 2. Establish eye contact. 3. Smile. 4. Keep going.	This happens practically all over Puerto Rico. In San Juan, the capital, women smile less at strange women, but it is still observed, and it happens quite often. They also talk openly to each other in public places such as stores, buses, markets, etc.

II. ACQUAINTANCES	VS	NVS	Comments
W^1 – ¡Hola! (Hi.) W^2 – ¡Hola! (Hi.)		1. Do not stop to talk. 2. Establish eye contact. 3. Smile and say greeting word. 4. Give head a light jerk upwards. 5. May wave arm and hand if person is at a distance.	*Other expressions may be used. ¡Adiós! – Literally, "Goodby" ¡Hola, qué tal! – Hi, how are things? ¡Eh! – Hey! ¡Saludos! – Greetings! (And many others, depending on class and region).

II. FRIENDS	VS	NVS	Comments
W^1 – ¡Hola! ¿Cómo estás? W^2 – ¡Hola! Bien, ¿y tú? W^1 – ¡Bien! W^2 – Y ¿qué hay de nuevo? W^1 – ---------- W^2 – Bueno, te veo, Hasta luego. Adiós. Hasta Luego, Adiós.		1. Stop, hug and kiss or touch right cheeks. 2. Voice rather loud, sometimes screechy. 3. Broad smiling, while talking. 4. Bodies sway and move while talking. 5. Hug and kiss again, or just simple light touching on taking farewell. 6. Separate. May look back and wave.	*Other expressions may be used. "¡Muchacha, tanto tiempo!" (If it has been weeks or months before the meeting). "¡No cambias, chica!" "¡Qué bien te ves!" In some Latin countries, this greeting is performed every single day. In others, after a separation of days. In still others, women also add a handshake, and there might be less touching and hugging.

*Verbal Script **Non-Verbal Script

I. GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS

C. Among men (Puerto Rico)

1. Similar age. 2. Same social status (class), profession.

I. STRANGERS	VS*	NVS**	Comments
M^1 en M^2 en	_____	1. Do not stop to talk. 2. Do not establish eye contact. 3. Do not smile. 4. Keep going.	1. This behavior seems pretty general all over Puerto Rico, and is similar to the behavior of Anglo women. 2. However, strange men may address each other and talk in public places, the same as Puerto Rican women.

II. ACQUAINTANCES	VS	NVS	Comments
M^1 – ¡Hola! M^2 – ¡Hola!		1. Do not stop to talk. 2. Establish eye contact. 3. A smile, not too broad. 4. Say greeting word. 5. May wave arm/hand. 6. Keep going.	1. Other greeting words may be used: ¡Adiós! – literally, "goodbye". ¡Qué tal! – How are you doing? ¡Eh! – Hey, there! ¡Saludos! – Greetings! ¡Buenas! – Good day! "Buenos días" "Buenas tardes." (There are others depending on class and region; unequals, socially speaking, greet a superior somewhat formally.)

III. FRIENDS	VS	NVS	Comments
M^1 – ¡Hombre! ¡Hola! ¡Qué tal! M^2 – ¡Muchacho, qué tal! M^1 – ¡Bien! M^2 – ¡Bien! M^1 – Bueno, te dejo. Hasta la vista. M^2 – Adiós, adiós.		1. Stop, shake hands with right hand. 2. Pat left shoulder with left hand. 3. Broad smiling, laughing while talking. 4. Bodies sway and move slightly. 5. Shake hands again on taking farewell. 6. Wave slightly on separation.	There are other expressions, of course. ¿Y qué se cuenta? – What's new? ¿Qué hay de nuevo? – What's new? ¿Cómo van las cosas? – How are things? In some Latin countries, the tapping of the shoulder becomes a hug, like in Mexico. However, after a long absence, the hug (no kissing) is used in Puerto Rico.

*Verbal Script **Non-Verbal Script

I. GREETINGS AND FAREWELL

D. Men and women (Puerto Rico)

1. Similar age. 2. Same social status, profession.

I. STRANGERS	VS*	NVS**	Comments
M^1 – (May comment "piropo") or say "¡Adiós! in a suggestive tone. W^1 – _____		1. Man stares. 2. Woman does not, although may look at man from corner of eye. 3. Man may stop while making comment, if he does make it. 4. Woman keeps going, and never smiles.	1. This is completely unacceptable behavior all over the U.S.A. 2. If done to an Anglo woman, she may get highly insulted. 3. Actually, there is *NO* staring at all in the U.S.A. 4. A "piropo": "If you cook as you walk, I'd like to marry you." 5. Men say this to any woman of any age.
II. ACQUAINTANCES	**VS**	**NVS**	**Comments**
M^1 – ¡Hola! (Hi!) W^1 – ¡Buenas! (Hi!)		1. Both stare. 2. "Small" smile. 3. Nod of head downwards. 4. Both keep going.	1. The man may smile a little more broadly than the woman. 2. The tone of the greeting is not too effusive.
III. FRIENDS	**VS**	**NVS**	**Comments**
M^1 – ¡Hola! W^1 – ¡Hola!		1. There may be shaking of hands. 2. Or a hug and a kiss "a lo puertorriqueño." 3. Smiling broadly; eyes "smile", too. 4. Slight patting of back. 5. No prolonged touching. 6. Affectionate tone in voice.	1. The touching and kissing which was reserved (and that somewhat limited) for relatives, is extending itself among friends of different sexes. But there are degrees of differences. 2. The affection in the voice and tone, however, is present in all encounters.

*Verbal Script **Non-Verbal Script

55

II. POLYCHRONISM (In Puerto Rico)

C. Department Chairman speaking to a teacher. A student interrupts.

	VERBAL SCRIPT	NON-VERBAL SCRIPT	COMMENTS
Chairperson	Veo que el examen ha resultado muy largo. (I see the test is too long.)	1. If the director has been around in the Department long, they will treat each other as friends.	1. A situation like this may be found anywhere with equals talking, although there is a slight degree of deference because of the authority of the Chairperson.
Teacher	Podríamos eliminar tres items de cada parte, y entonces el examen se queda con 50 items. (We could eliminate 3 items from each part, and then the test comes to 50 pts.)	2. If they are discussing the test items, they will be sitting very close together, looking over the test.	2. Usually, University Presidents, Chancellors, Deans, big business executives, high government officials, keep their office doors closed. Most other people do not. The secretary up front will keep people from going through, those closed doors; however, she will let relatives, friends, or distinguished visitors through no matter the important activities being carried out "inside". Usually, a visitor who knows his "rank" both socially or in family or friendly terms simply tells the secretary, "Just tell him who is out here." And she does! Immediately the answer comes "Do come in", or the official himself erupts to greet the social or affective equal waiting outside. No secretary would dare keep any of these people outside. She would lose her job, or else learn fast.
Student	(Stands silently at the door, and stares at Chairperson.)	3. The seriousness of the task is interspersed by light joking and laughing, as it proceeds.	
Chairperson	¿Querías verme?	4. The student stands silently waiting to be acknowledged by the people in authority inside the Office. He stares silently at the Chairperson until he/she looks at him. Then he talks.	
Student	Si puede atenderme. (Looks at other teacher.) Tengo un problema muy serio. (I wish you could see me briefly. I have a serious problem.)	5. Since the teacher is superior to the student in authority and class, he must agree to be interrupted. Too, he is a stranger to the student and older than he.	
Teacher	Atiéndelo. Yo espero. No te apures. (Take care of him. I can wait. Don't worry.)	6. The turn of being taken care of will be given over to the newcomer, for the culture says newcomers have to be taken care of right away.	
Student	Se lo agradezco, a la verdad. Es un asunto muy serio. (I'm really grateful, for it is a very serious problem.)	56	3. Because of the above, appointments do not necessarily mean exclusive attention to you. Interruptions are always possible.
Chairperson	¿Y cuál es el problema? Díme. (And what is the problem? Tell me.)		

II. POLYCHRONISM (In Puerto Rico)

Talking

A. Clerk and customer.

Approaching

Another customer, or friend of clerk.

	VERBAL SCRIPT	NON-VERBAL SCRIPT	COMMENTS
Clerk	¿En qué puedo servirle? (What can I do for you?)	1. Makes eye contact with customer, and smiles if she — the clerk — is a woman. A male clerk will possibly smile but not as broadly as a woman clerk.	1. A clerk who is not agile at acknowledging newcomers before they address him/her is a poor clerk at any business establishment. The same holds true for receptionists, secretaries, administrators, teachers, etc.
Customer #1	¿Tiene guantes de invierno? (Do you have winter gloves?)		
Clerk	Tenemos unos pocos. Mire éstos. Pruébeselos. Son calientitos. (We have a few. See these. Try them on. They are nice and warm.)	2. Customer does not necessarily establish eye contact with clerk. May do so, and smile, if she — the customer — is a woman. Male customers smile less than womenfolk.	2. Constant or semi-constant eye contact with person you are talking to is difficult for Latin people to establish. Steady stares between listener and speaker are reserved for people in love . . . or getting there.
Customer #2	Mire, ¿tiene corbatas color azul claro? (Say, do you have light blue ties?)	3. Clerk notices second customer approaching, and establishes eye contact with him/her before the customer says "Mire".	3. A good clerk is also very adept at seeing approaching and prospective customers, and at acknowledging them right away, before they are addressed. Customers will look for eye contact with clerks, and the latter have the first say.
Clerk	Sí, cómo nó. Fíjese en éstas. Son finísimas, de seda pura. (Sure. See these. They are very exclusive, made out of pure silk.)	4. Clerk proceeds to take care of both customers, shifting from one to the other at will, while checking how the sale is proceeding.	4. If a clerk does not acknowledge the new customer, he will be addressed by this last one so as to attract his/her attention with words. A clerk who needs to be hailed thus is considered rather ineffective and/or surly or ill-mannered.
Etc.			

II. POLYCHRONISM (In Puerto Rico)

B. Teacher speaking to another teacher, while another teacher (friend) approaches.

	VERBAL SCRIPT	NON-VERBAL SCRIPT	COMMENTS
Teacher #1	No sabía de tu divorcio, Carlos. (I didn't know about your divorce).	1. Since these are friends, they are standing quite close together, but while #1 speaks, he is not staring at his listener, who is staring at him.	1. These happenings take place mostly among friends, and people of the same social class. Teachers behave like this with other teachers, janitors with other janitors, laborers with other laborers, secretaries with other secretaries, and students with other students.
Teacher #2	Sí, Luis. Hombre, ya no se podía tolerar la situación más. (Yes, indeed. I could not stand the situation any longer).	2. Gestures come in here, of "It is finished", or "It is over with".	2. In the classroom, students will interrupt other students to address their teachers, usually those teachers with whom they have established close friendly relationship. It is expected for teachers to establish these relationships, since teachers have grown into extensions of parental figures in Puerto Rico. With men-teachers — there are very few — students sometimes relate as with affectionate grandfathers, since fathers are usually distant, non-touching, authoritarian, and not expressive of affection.
Teachers #3	Luis y Carlos, ¡qué bueno verlos! Carlos, ¿podrías darme el título de aquél libro que mencioné?	3. When Pedro approaches, the two or one of the two may have seen him approaching. They acknowledge him with a smile before he is 5 feet away.	
Teacher #1	¿Qué libro, Pedro? Quizás lo tenga yo entre los míos. (What book? I may have it.)	4. Pedro may touch both his men friends on the shoulders, or simulate a punch at their stomachs in greeting them since they are good friends.	
Teacher #2	No hombre, no se lo prestes nada, que este es un hombre rico. Que lo compre. (Don't lend it to him. He's a rich man. Let him buy it.)	5. When #2 starts kidding about his being rich, the three may move away from each other and laugh.	
Teacher #3	Tú tranquilo. Con amigos como tú, no se necesitan enemigos. (Quiet now, you. With friends like you, who needs enemies.)	58	
Teacher #2	Te lo doy ahora mismo. Vena la oficina. (I'll give it to you right away. Come to my office.)		
Etc.....			

CASE STUDY

LINGUISTIC AND NON-VERBAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PUERTO RICAN CHILDREN IN DISTRICT 23, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

JULY, 1975

CARMEN JUDITH NINE-CURT
University of Puerto Rico

(Subsidized by District 23's component of the Board's Program 30, Module. Pilot Schools Project for 1974-75).

In what follows, the author would like to present the procedures followed in observing how much cultural retention there was among the different groups of Puerto Rican children observed in the schools visited in District 23, and the observations made therein. The schools chosen were P.S. 332, an elementary school, and P.S. 55, an intermediate school. The classes observed were the following:

P.S. 332 — Elementary School

	Grade	*Teachers*	*Number of Students Registered*	*Observation Time*
1.	Kindergarten	Ms. García (P.R.)	15	1 hour
2.	Second Grade	Ms. Camacho (P.R.) Ms. Pérez (P.R.)	32	3 hours
3.	Second Grade	Mr. González (P.R.)	32	1 hour
4.	Second Grade	Ms. Vega (P.R.) Ms. Soto (P.R.)	16	1 hour
5.	Third Grade	Ms. Alemán (Cuban) Ms. Miranda (P.R.)	20	2 hours
6.	Fifth Grade (Reading)	Ms. Myers (Cuban)	5	1 hour

P.S. 55 — Intermediate School

1.	Seventh Grade	Ms. Belkis (Cuban)	29	2 hours

When asked, all of the teachers visited told the author that most of the children in their classes had been born and raised in the United States. Very few of the children present had just come from Puerto Rico.

Several classes of Black children were also visited and observed for the purpose of comparing cultural differences between these children and the Puerto Rican children. The classes were the following:

P.S. 332 — Elementary School

	Grade	*Teachers*	*Number of Students Registered*	*Observation Time*
1.	Kindergarten	Ms. Kay (U.S.A.)	15	1 hour
2.	Third Grade	Ms. Zimmerman	20	2 hours
3.	Third Grade	Ms. Grossman	20	1 hour

The author had previously decided to concentrate her observations on a few manifestations of culture, since the time for observation and study was rather short, less than two months time. Consequently, the observations centered on language and non-verbal communication. Following are the procedures used and the observations made:

I. LANGUAGE

A. *Sounds.*

Puerto Rican Spanish is characterized by several phonetic features one of them being the prevalence of the velar r, (x), which is somewhat similar to the sound of the letter "j" in Castillian Spanish in words such as "jamás" (never) and "jamón" (ham). This velar r is also heard in French and Portuguese; but in the Spanish-speaking world, it is only heard in Puerto Rico. It was also heard among the Puerto Rican students observed and interviewed in District 23. Words such as "Río Piedras" (a town in Puerto Rico), "carro" (car), "arroz" (rice), and "rompió" (broke) were pronounced with the velar r: / xiopiedrah/, /kaxo/, /axoh/, and /xompio/.

Another Puerto Rican phonetic feature is the pronunciation of the r in final syllable position as an /l/. This was also observed among the children. The r's in "verdad" (true), "echar" (throw), "corderito" (lamb), "gozar" (enjoy), "jugar" (play), "gordita" (fat), were all pronounced with the /l/ sound, in true Puerto Rican style: /beldá/, /eča̱l/, /kolderíto/, /gosa̱l/, /huga̱l/, and /goldíta/.

The aspirated s in final syllable position is also typical of Puerto Rican Spanish, and the children here also had it in their speech. In reading out loud from a Spanish textbook, the /s/ alternated with the /h/ (aspiration), but as soon as the children turned to spoken Spanish, only the /h/ was heard. A girl read /boske/ (forest) as she toiled over the printed page, but when the teacher asked her about the name of the place, the answer was /bohke/.

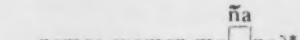
In true Caribbean fashion, the z, ce, and ci were pronounced as /s/. The following words were heard pronounced with the /s/: "zapato" (shoe), "cerebro" (brain), "cien" (a hundred): /sapato/, /serebro/, and /sien/.

Puerto Rico is "yeista" like most of Latin America, that is, it pronounces ll and y with a sound similar to the one found in the English words Jim and John for the letter j, /dz/. The children said yo accordingly – /dʒo/ – and the ll and y in the words "llamar" (call) and "llanura" (field) and "Yunque" (a mountain in Puerto Rico) were also pronounced in the same

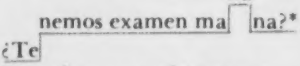
fashion, that is, with the sound /dʒ/: /dʒamar/, /dʒanura/, and /dzunke/.

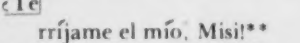
B. *Intonation and Paralanguage.* The Puerto Rican children observed in District 23 also had Puerto Rican intonation patterns in questions and petitions.

1. Yes-No Question



2. Petitions



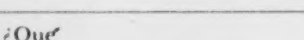


*Do we have a test tomorrow?

**Please correct mine, Ms. _____ !

3. WH-questions

(What is going to happen?)



(At what place are you reading, María?)

The petition was also accompanied by the typical Puerto Rican "whine", which oftentimes means "Please", as in this case, and at others, substitutes for the "Ay, bendito." (Pity, pity) expression and feeling so prevalent in Puerto Rican Spanish and culture. Women use it more than men, and it was quite evident particularly among the girls observed. I recorded it more than five times.

The tone of voice among the girls and boys observed was also typically Puerto Rican. The boys were loud-voiced while the girls were by comparison quiet; soft-toned and low pitched in their talk, except when they had a petition or a complaint to make and then the "whine" came out. However, the third grade of Black children visited showed a marked difference here. In this group, the girls were the ones who were loud-voiced and oftentimes shrill, while the boys seemed to be rather quiet and not so screechy by comparison. All the screaming — and there was plenty — seemed to be done by the girls here. It was definitely the other way around among the Puerto Rican children.

C. *Grammar.* Their Spanish grammar was also observed as the author talked to the children in Spanish. They responded in completely understandable Spanish, and in one instance was told by a lively Puerto Rican second grader of a "pichón" (bird) that had appeared at the window of her apartment, and how she had taken the same to the bathtub where it was and where she expected it to be when she got back there. And on and on . . . in good Puerto Rican Spanish. It was evident that the majority of the children used the language possibly in the fullness of its grammar. Agreement of subject and verb, person and verb, most of the verb tenses, the conjugation of common verbs, negative statements, questions, they were all used adequately when they spoke with me. In fact, some very typical "mistakes" in grammar were also evident in the speech of the students: "Yo ha estudia'o" (I have studied) for "Yo he estudia'o"; "fuistes" for "fuiste" (You went); "trompecé" for "tropecé" (I stumbled); and "Puede que haiga venido" for "Puede que haya venido" (He may have come.). All these belong to what is known as "rustic" Spanish, heard all over the Spanish-speaking world, both in Spain and Latin America. The language of some of these Puerto Rican children also had them, a beautiful proof of the continuity of their linguistic inheritance.

D. *Vocabulary.* The vocabulary used by the children also had expressions typical of Puerto Rico, "puertorriqueñismos". The following were heard among them: "Misi", an adaptation of "Mrs." and used to address teachers and professors; "enfogoná", "empantaloná" for "angry"; and the ever present "Mira!" (Look!) for attracting someone's attention. "Jesús!" (Bless!) — actually, "Jesus" — was heard when the interviewing author sneezed.

II. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

When a child is born, he becomes a member of a family which in turn is a member of a particular culture. The child very soon learns not just the language of that family, that culture, but also the non-verbal features of that culture just as perfectly as he does the language. When any child comes to school, to kindergarten or first grade, he is already a person with a culture, with a language, with a non-verbal system, all of these operating automatically and out of awareness.

Regarding non-verbal communication, Ray L. Birdwhistell, the famous American anthropologist and kinesicist, has the following to say: "No more than 30% to 35% of the social meaning of a conversation or an interaction is carried by words" (1970, 50). Actually, most people, teachers and laymen included, believe that our communication is centrally verbal. Well, it is not. Birdwhistell comments that "the communication stream can be made up of multiple behavioral patterns existing

on different levels. Research is slowly demonstrating that communicating is made up up of levels of activity, the verbal being one among many others". (1970, 88). There is movement (Kinesics), space (proxemics), how you order your activities (temporality), touching (haptics), how you handle your eyes (occulisics), and of course, the olfactory and thermal levels, although very little investigation has been carried out in these last two levels as yet. "Communication upon investigation appears to be a system which makes use of the channels of all of the sensory modalities, a continuous process." (1970, 69).

In observing these children, the author tried to locate some of the non-verbal features of Puerto Rican culture. The observations made were the following:

A. *Gestures.* These were observed constantly, and those used by the students were mostly recognizably Puerto Rican. There was the wiggling of the nose to signify a question (What did you say?) and the teacher who made it got an answer. The student who reacted to the "question" did so with another nose wiggle. A truly non-verbal "dialogue". There was also pointing with the lips which is also prevalent in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean countries as well as among some American Indian tribes. There was profuse smiling by the girls in recognizing me and as this author acknowledged them. The smiling was counted throughout the visits, and there were approximately 60 instances of the same. The boys, in true Puerto Rican fashion, smiled much less, but they did if the author kept looking at them and smiled. Usually, they turned and hid their faces after smiling back, another typical behavior of Puerto Rican children.

B. *Proximity.* The children observed stayed very close to each other when they were working in groups. During the gesture quiz administered to them (see below), they came very close to me, with their tummies somewhat protruded in my direction, a clue in Puerto Rican culture – and in many others, I am sure – that means "touch me", or "hug me". I did, and then proceeded with the quiz. At the end of the same, many of the girls nestled close to me, another clue which says "put your arms around me." The Puerto Rican teachers more than the Cubans seemed always at arms reach of the students, and there seemed to be very little verbal ordering of the children except in one case. If a student was called down, the name was said, large rounded eyes stared at the culprit, and that was that. In the rooms where Cubans were teaching Puerto Ricans and Anglo teachers were teaching Black children, admonitions and scoldings oftentimes became mini-lectures somewhat embarassing to this author, who possibly was reacting culturally, that is, in Puerto Rican style, to the verbal assault.

C. *Touching.* The author counted 23 times of students touching their peers, teachers or me. I was touched three times in all, and in one case, my hair was caressed and complimented as "¡Qué lindo!" (How beautiful!) by one of the girls, a totally permissible behavior among Puerto Rican children and their teachers. However, this — touching — seems to follow sex lines. A Puerto Rican boy would not have touched me. I observed practically no touching among the Black children; one of the Anglo teachers did nestle several of the Black girls close to her. She seemed to have a particularly warm relationship with her class and very good discipline.

D. *Eye language.* As mentioned above, I counted over 60 instances of staring at me followed by smiling upon my recognizing the stare. During the administration of the gesture quiz, the students usually averted their eyes, and did not look at me in the eye, as is customary among Puerto Ricans — young and old — in talking with authority figures. In fact, many wives still do not stare much at their husbands when they are talking to them. With the children of this study, I had to remind them again and again to look at me, for I was making gestures and they had to look at me in order to see them. All this is very Puerto Rican: you stare and look people over quite carefully when not engaged in a conversation; during a conversation, however, eyes are usually averted or shifted away quite regularly from the pupils of the other person.

In the classes of Black children, there was much less eye contact with me in order to recognize me, and very little smiling among both girls and boys and with me. While in an integrated class of Black children and Puerto Ricans, the Blacks looked towards me only four times — and these, girls, — the Puerto Ricans boys and girls looked at me over ten times. However, when I administered the gesture quiz to the Black children, most of them looked at me straight in the eye or to my face. This is the reverse of the Puerto Rican way: Blacks and also Anglos do not stare at you in passing or when not engaged in a conversation with you; however, they stare steadily into your pupils when they are talking to you.

E. *Handling of the body trunk.* Puerto Ricans belong to the cultures that handle the trunk as if it were made up of parts, in contrast to those cultures that handle the trunk as if it were one unit, made up of just one piece, as Anglos do. This was also evident in the observation of the Puerto Rican children. Their waist and neck muscles twisted easily, and sometimes a few of the children broke out into moving their

shoulders, hips, and heads separately in typical Caribbean style. However, the trunks of the Black children seemed definitely rigid in comparison to those of the Puerto Ricans, in fact, quite similiar to the Anglos' rigidity as evidenced in the walking, turning, sitting and dancing of these last.

F. *Polychronism*. Puerto Ricans also belong to those cultures that can take care of more than one thing at a time, and also talk to more than one person at a time. This was observed both in the teachers and the children. There were 14 instances of more than three children offering their homework to their teachers for inspection at the same time. The latter reacted in true Puerto Rican fashion, taking care of each child without being upset by their demands, all of them made at the same time. Several instances were observed – 8 of them – of many children answering at once and together. The teachers accepted it and went on to the next point. If the Puerto Rican teachers wanted just one person to answer, they did not scold the other students, but simply insisted by calling out several times the student they wanted to hear answering. However, in the Anglo classrooms, with the Black children, these were constantly being called down and stifly scolded because they were answering in chorus. The Anglo teachers who are monochronic – from a culture that takes care of just one thing at a time – were acting true to their culture. One cannot help, however, remember the Black church services one has attended where people shout out their appreciation and joy at something being said, and one wonders whether these Black children are polychronic in group situations. Then, answering in a chorus with other children is simply culturally acceptable behavior for them.

The Black children also acted similarly to the Puerto Ricans at a certain point of the interviews. They wanted to "hang around" and see what was happening while I was administering the quiz to another child, a totally permissible thing in Puerto Rico where privacy seems nill by Anglo standards.

It seems from the above that the Puerto Rican children observed, acted very Puerto Rican both verbally and nonverbally. The following gesture quiz and the results obtained in it seem to substantiate this further.

The quiz was developed* and administered in order to satisfy the author's curiosity regarding how able these children were of recognizing gestures commonly used in Puerto Rico. In order to see how much of this nonverbal feature of culture was being retained by them, an effort was made to select Puerto Rican

children who had been born and raised here in the States. This author selected 5 such children in one of the second grades visited, 10 such children in one of the third grades, and 5 such children in the seventh grade. There was no time to give the quiz to more children. By mere coincidence, and because they insisted on taking the quiz, it was also given to 5 seventh graders who had been born and raised in Puerto Rico, and who had come to the United States after they were eight, ten or eleven years of age. Later on I realized I had unwittingly provided for myself a neat comparison between children born and raised in the United States and others born and raised in Puerto Rico. The table which follows the quiz indicates the results among the Puerto Ricans as well as the results obtained by the Black children on the same quiz.

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*From one designed by Dra. Annette López, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

QUIZ ON PUERTO RICAN GESTURES

(20 items)

Spanish	English
Example: Mi tío es ___G___ (gordo).	My uncle is ___G___ (fat).

(Arms extended at sides of body with hands opened about a foot away from sides.)

1. En la fiesta de anoche había así ___G___ (mucha) de gente.	1. There were ___G___ (a lot) of people at the party last night.

(Palms of both hands face up with fingers closing and opening several times in pear shape. Hands are held in front of body.)

2. Mi tío es gordo y también ___G___ (maceta).	2. My uncle is fat and also ___G___ (stingy).

(Left fist hits elbow bone of bent right arm several times; right arm is bent close to the body with right hand almost touching right shoulder.)

3. La maestra está hoy así ___G___ (con coraje).	3. The teacher is ___G___ (angry) today.

(Both hands face away from face and at its level; fingers bend to form an open but stiff claw.)

4. Si yo te digo, "¡Mira!"
G
(señala con los labios)
¿qué fue lo que yo hice?

4. If I say to you, "Look!"
G, what
(pointing with lips)
did I do?

(Lips are pursed and point towards object listener is supposed to look at.)

5. Este bizcocho está G.
(muy bueno)

5. This cake is G.
(tops)

(Bunched fingers of right hand touch right cheek three times. At the third time, fingers open up and remain stretched upwards for a second or two.)

6. Te voy a decir una cosa.
Es G.
(un secreto)

6. I am going to tell you something. It is G.
(a secret)

(Protruded and closed lips are held firmly between thumb and forefinger.)

7. Sí, cruza la calle, pero
G.
(cuidado)

7. Yes, you may cross the street, but G.
(be careful)

(Forefinger is taken to the lower lid of right eye, and it pulls lid down slightly holding it in position for a few seconds.)

8. ¿Cómo dijiste que te llamabas? (Estudiante contesta.) G.
(se encoge la nariz)

8. What is your name again?
(Student answers.) G.
(wiggle nose)

(Nose is wiggled several times to ask the student to repeat.)

9. Mamá compro unas semillitas
así G ayer.
(pequeñitas)

9. Mother bought some very
G seeds yesterday.
(tiny)

(Forefinger and thumb come together and touch at the very end of each finger.)

10. Si te dijera que te fueras
a la pizarra, y entonces
te hago así G,
(ven acá)
¿qué te dije?

10. If I tell you to stand by
the blackboard, and then I
do this G,
(come over here)
what am I saying to you?

(With palm of right hand facing out towards the student, the fingers come up and down several times.)

11. Yo tengo un perrito que
es así G.
(flaquito)

11. I have a dog and it is like
this G.
(thin)

(With palm of right hand facing out, pinky is stretched up. Other fingers remain closed over palm of hand.)

12. Si yo hago ésto ___G___ (¿qué pasa?) ¿qué te digo?

12. If I do this, ___G___ (what is it?) what am I saying?

(With arms partly stretched out at waist, hands move in a rotating motion from palms down to palms up, finishing up with a quick twist of the wrists.)

13. Si tu contestaras a una de mis preguntas así ___G___ (no sé) ¿qué me dices?

13. If you answered one of my questions like this ___G___ (I don't know) what are you saying?

(Shoulders are shrugged and arms go up above shoulder level, while eyebrows move up and corners of lips move down.)

14. ¡Qué pena! El bizcocho ___G___ (se acabó).

14. What a pity! The cake ___G___ (is all gone).

(With both hands at waist level and in front of body, the right hand brushes the left palm outward, and then, the positions of the hands change so that the left hand can then brush the right palm outward.)

15. La maestra está ___G___ (pensando).

15. The teacher is ___G___ (thinking).

(Forefinger touches right side of forehead several times. Head is bent a little forward.)

16. Mi hermana y su novio siempre están ___G___ (de punta).

16. My sister and her boyfriend are always ___G___ (fighting).

(Tip of right forefinger meets tip of left forefinger with palms of both hands facing chest. Then, the tips touch and recede twice.)

17. Si tú estuvieras en la pizarra, y yo hiciera ésto ___G___ (ven acá), ¿qué tú harías?

17. If you were by the blackboard, and I did this ___G___ (come here) what would you do?

(Head is nodded while speaker makes a hook-like gesture in the air with forefinger towards the listener.)

18. ¿Qué quiere decir ésto? ___G___ (no, no).

18. What does this mean? ___G___ (no, no).

(Forefinger of right hand is moved sidewise several times while it is in an upward position with palm of hand facing outwards away from speaker.)

19. ¿Qué quiere decir ésto?
G .
(váyase)

19. What does this mean?
G .
(go away)

(Right hand is moved away from body to the side of it several times with fingers making a sweeping motion outwards.)

20. ¿Qué quiere decir ésto?
G .
(así, así)

20. What does this mean?
G .
(so, so)

(Right hand is moved from side to side several times with slow wrist motions.)

The students came to me one at a time, and I explained in Spanish that the quiz was like a guessing game. I was going to make certain gestures and I wanted them to tell me the first thing that came into their minds after seeing it. No grades would be given and everybody was going to pass it. Then I proceeded to give them the example which was recognized by all the children, Puerto Ricans and Blacks alike. I then gave the rest of the items writing in my notebook a (+) for correct answers and a (-) for incorrect responses. I gave the quiz to the Black children in English. These are the children who participated in the activity.

I. *Second grade* *(Age)*
(USA born and raised)

1.	Luz Robledo	7
2.	Celedonia Torres	8
3.	Rosalind Rosa	7
4.	José Ferrer	8
5.	Edwin Rivera	8

II. *Third Grade* *(Age)*
(USA born and raised)

1.	María González	8
2.	Wanda Rivera	8
3.	Elizabeth Rivera	9
4.	Nancy Aquino	8
5.	Sonia Rivera	9
6.	Luis Feliciano	9
7.	Roberto Rivera	9
8.	David Vélez	9
9.	Eric Sierra	9
10.	Angel Vélez	9

(5 girls; 5 boys)

IV. *Seventh Grade* *(Age)*
(Born and raised in PR)

1.	Raymond Guzmán	12
2.	Alberto Crespo	13
3.	Eulalia Cardona	12
4.	Edna Naveda	12
5.	Olga Torres	15

V. *Third Grade* *(Age)*
Black children
(USA born and raised)

1.	Ivy Jones	9
2.	Tonya Worthen	8
3.	Michelle Fluellen	9
4.	Doretta Hodges	8
5.	Dana Canty	8
6.	Tony Johnson	9
7.	Reney McNight	8
8.	James McCokale	8
9.	Mark Gonney	9
10.	Victor Harrison	8

(5 girls; 5 boys)

III. *Seventh Grade* *(Age)*

(USA born and raised)

1. Eddie Gómez 14
2. Raymond Cruz 13
3. Domingo Jiménez 11
4. María Zalazar 15
5. Víctor M. Obledo 13

Following, the results of the quiz for all the groups who took it:

TABLE — Quiz on Puerto Rican Gestures

The percentages represent the percentage of correct answers for each item that each group obtained.

ITEM #	2nd grade P.R.'s born & raised in the U.S.A. (5 Stds.)	3rd grade P.R.'s born & raised in the U.S.A. (10 Stds.)	7th grade P.R.'s born & raised in the U.S.A. (5 Stds.)	7th grade P.R.'s born & raised in P.R. (5 Stds.)	3rd grade Black children born & raised in the U.S.A. (10 Stds.)
1	100%	80%	100%	100%	0%
2	80	50	80	100	20
3	60	60	60	20	40
4	40	80	60	40	30
5	40	90	100	100	10
6	60	80	40	80	30
7	100	100	100	100	60
8	100	90	80	100	10
9	80	90	100	100	50
10	0	60	80	100	0
11	40	90	100	100	10
12	60	90	100	100	20
13	80	90	100	80	80
14	80	80	80	80	40
15	80	70	60	80	60
16	20	10	0	0	0
17	100	80	100	80	60
18	100	100	100	100	80
19	100	100	100	100	100
20	80	100	100	100	0
Average of %'s	70%	78.50% 76.83% of P.R.'s, U.S.A.	82%	83%	35%

COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE

The Puerto Rican children who were born and raised in the United States recognized over three fourths of the gestures included in the quiz, a percentage substantially higher than that of Black children — over 40% higher — who not only scored low in the recognition of most of the gestures but who also throughout the quiz felt rather uncomfortable and expressed it because of their inability to get meaning from so many of them. I would venture to say that this was so simply because the Black children seem to belong to a culture quite different from that of the Puerto Ricans, although possibly there are some points of similarity. I am sure more studies on additional cultural contrasts between these two groups will substantiate this statement.

From the results we can also conclude that the youngest Puerto Rican children knew fewer of the gestures than the older children. Possibly these gestures cover a range of activities that are not entirely accessible and familiar to all the children.

Another interesting point brought out by the quiz was that all the seventh graders whether born and raised in the United States or in Puerto Rico scored very close. This was indeed quite a piece of information, for it seems to suggest that these Puerto Rican children, those born and raised in the United States, are very Puerto Rican in more ways than we ever thought before, and that their culture is alive and well in spite of the fact that they are so far away from the homeland.

The fact that the Black children did so well in recognizing some of the gestures suggests several possibilities: maybe these gestures are widely used in many cultures: the gestures with the meanings of "Be careful!", "I don't know.", "Thinking.", "Come over here.", "No, no.", "Go away." Another possibility is that these are gestures shared by Caribbean peoples and American Blacks because of the African element in both cultures. In order to test the latter, it might be productive to have a group of Anglo children take the same quiz and notice in particular how they come out in these specific gestures. If they do badly, if they cannot recognize them, then these gestures might be of African origin.

I would like to mention the following as additional information regarding the differences between Black and Puerto Rican children in this study. The Black children consistently told me I was blowing a kiss as I pointed with my lips. Anglos also interpret the gesture in the same way. The Black children also felt that when I touched my cheek to say that the cake was great I was saying that the cake was hot. The gesture for "stingy" meant "mean" to most of the Black children, although I am not too sure they have such a gesture. The gesture for "many, loads of" was interpreted by many to mean "noisy". It was indeed a revealing experience, for it dramatically brought out the fact that gestures the same as sounds are in themselves arbitrary symbols. I always felt that possibly gestures did represent a little better than sounds what they represented, but apparently and in most instances, this is not the case and they are just as baffling to a foreigner to a particular culture as words in the foreign language are.

Another interesting point was to find that one or two of the gestures that are quite common in my hometown of Mayagüez in Puerto Rico were completely unknown to these children, who however, did so well with the others. Number 16, "fighting", seemed to be a pretty strange and foreign gesture for all the Puerto Rican children involved as well as for the Black children. However, it is not so for me nor for most of my friends from my hometown. We may have to do a study of regionalisms of gestures within a cultural community the same way it is done for sounds and vocabulary within a linguistic community. One gesture which seemed completely unknown to second graders — number 10, "Come here." — seemed, however, to be learned quite well with the passage of time. Older children knew it quite well. In interpreting gesture No. 20, "So, so", one of the children said "Cum si, cum sa." which is the Puerto Rican version of the French "Comme ci, comme ça." and which I had not heard said since my grandmother's time. Language forms as well as gestures are indeed resilient bits of things, and so are the cultures that embody them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All of the above seems to point towards the adequacy of carrying out further investigation among the children of minority groups in order to pin-point the cultural features they bring with them into the American classrooms and which contrast with Anglo features. The above observations regarding the Puerto Rican children seem to indicate that most of the Puerto Rican culture is there in those children, vibrant and evident for observers to study and spell out. But the sad reality is that these same children belong to one of the minority groups which in the United States has one of the highest drop out rates from schools, particularly in the large cities of this country.* This author believes that this high drop-out rate is very possibly due to the disastrous encounter of these children's culture with that of their Anglo teachers and surroundings, an encounter which very probably makes the children terribly confused and lost. Most Puerto Rican children are being brought to the schools by their trusting and hope-filled parents to experience . . . culture shock! They cannot help but become inattentive, depressed and withdrawn, and as a result, incapable of learning. No wonder so many flee!

*The important study by Dr. Isidro Lucas, "Puerto Rican Dropouts in Chicago: Numbers and Motivation", (1973) indicates the drop-out rate in Chicago to be 71.2 percent for Puerto Ricans . . . Lucas found that drop-out statistics were higher among Puerto Rican students who had lived in the United States ten years or more, as compared with the newcomers . . . The drop-out rate in New York is slightly lower for Puerto Ricans when compared to Chicago . . . (Samuel Betances, "Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans in Higher Education". *The Rican Journal of Contemporary Puerto Rican Thought*, Vol. I, Number IV, May, 1974, p. 33).

However, in the bilingual groups the author visited in District 23, the atmosphere was relaxed, very Puerto Rican, very warm, very spontaneous and accepting, very polychronic, and the children seemed to be doing one thing with great enthusiasm and gusto: LEARNING! My heart felt heavy for those other children in other kinds of rooms — the so called "special" (read "retarded") or integrated rooms — where nothing really happens except the very heartless and unchecked — although unwitting in most cases - destruction of the self-image of these children, their identity, and their desire to learn . . . possibly to live. This author strongly recommends that the bilingual program of District 23 be continued and strengthened.

District 23 is an ideal place for the establishment of a bilingual-bicultural program of imagination and great humaneness with every child included in it. One of the first impressions the author received was that the Anglo teachers were quite unaware of the fact that they were teaching children who definitely belonged to cultures very different from their own, whether they were Puerto Rican or Black children. However, any teacher who is involved in the teaching of such children, whether in District 23 or in any other school district in the Nation, should be informed, should be very carefully trained, first, to find out who he/she is culture-wise, something most people do not really know, and next, carefully instructed on how to deal with his/her culturally different educational charges so as to effectively promote self-respect among them and retention of their cultural identity. This is actually the only road to real success and a satisfying way of life for these children. Peace Corps volunteers receive a rigorous and first caliber training in order to prepare themselves to go abroad to teach and help foreigners face the challenges of a new world. By the same token, teachers of many American citizens who are themselves truly "foreigners" in these shores should also receive the same if not better training in dealing with them, in teaching them, in bringing forth adequate adults to face a very challenging world right here in our own country. I sincerely believe that our children here have as much a right, if not more, of being saved, as children in other parts of the world do. The fact is that too many American children are being destroyed in too many of our schools.

The study of nonverbal communication has proven, at least in my experience, to be of great help in making teachers aware, first of all, of their own culture, more so than the learning of their own history, values, and achievements as a race or nation. This matter of nonverbal communication touches a person so close that in being told of it, the person undergoes a revelation similar to the one undergone in therapy, and just as insightful and satisfying. Again and again, after talking to groups of student-teachers, teachers, and other professionals about NVC — Latin American and Anglo — people have come up to me to thank me for revealing to them so much about themselves of which they were completely unaware. Moreover, there is nothing like the contrastive study of NVC across cultures to highlight the fact that cultures are neither good nor bad, but simply different, with strong and weak points like the human beings that produced them. And nothing like NVC disposes listeners to a change of heart regarding the giving of value judgements to behaviors and practices different from those they have inherited through their culture. I sincerely believe such a study is indispensable in a city like New York City where not one people live together, but

many different peoples, trying courageously to live out in their lives the scandalous and incredible dream that is at the root of this nation, namely, that different peoples can live together in peace and harmony with dignity and self-respect.

Not only Anglo teachers need to learn about this, but the bilingual teachers as well, the Puerto Ricans and the Cubans, in case they are not too sure that their own culture is just as good as the one of the surrounding community. They also need this information in order to learn the skill that is indispensable for Anglos and any person in this modern world of ours, namely, the learning of how to switch cultural channels when the situation demands it. Without this skill, which can definitely be taught, we go through the marvel of our modern world mentally and physically limited to our own cultural "ghetto". I believe the times are ripe for the destruction of these barriers between peoples, and we have the information to help it come about. We also have a long tradition of faith in the source of love, in God, who can help us, if we are equipped with the right skills, to go out to others and understand, accept and love.

Finally, the children should also learn about NVC and how important a cultural feature it is in their human make-up and in the make-up of every person surrounding them. They should also be taught how to switch cultural channels, both Puerto Ricans and Black children, so that they will be able to perceive and react positively in the community that surrounds all of them. In New York City we have the ideal laboratory for such an experiment, for New York offers the child the exceedingly rich possibility of observing and participating in many diverse cultures, a feature many excellent educational systems would like to offer their children but cannot because of their cultural isolation. And a child living in New York City can have this unique opportunity. He can come to realize that there is not just one culture, a "superior" and only culture, but rather, that there are many others, all of great worth, and worth preserving and understanding.

Don Jaime Benítez, former president of the University of Puerto Rico once said* that the new version of the American dream seems to be "to find and experience the new enterprise of living together. Together but different." Edward T. Hall, famed American anthropologist, adds the following: "(There must be) a rekindling of the adventuresome spirit and excitement of our frontier days . . . We are confronted with urban and cultural frontiers today . . . We need both excitement and ideas and we will discover that both are more apt to be found in people than in things . . . in involvement rather than in detachment from life". (1966, 187).

Beginning with his own culture, through dialogues, role-playing, stories of cultural conflicts that take place daily because of contrasting features in NVC, the Puerto Rican child, the Black child, the Chinese child, the Anglo child will come to realize who he really is, a crucial understanding if he is to become a real person. For the child must command his very own style of communication, which is definitely culture determined. As Alan Lomax says in *Folk Song Style and Culture* ". . . a person's

*At the Convention on Bilingual Education, N.Y.C., April, 1974.

emotional stability is a function of his command of a communication style that binds him to a human community with a history." (1968, 5). From a joyful knowledge and insightful understanding of who he is, he can then proceed into finding out about the other "communication styles", particularly the styles of those around him in his neighborhood. From understanding, respect and love usually flow. New York City and this whole world could very well use some of these two ingredients.

Practical things could be done, and District 23 has the desire, the staff, and the means for doing them. The bilingual courses should enlarge their culture course to include NVC, both for Blacks and for Puerto Ricans. Of course, the study of history and society would remain as well as the study of the lives of great men, both Puerto Rican and Black. But the marrow of interpersonal relationships is found not so much in knowledge as in language together with the NVC that accompanies it in perfect synchrony, "more fine-grained than that of any corps de ballet". (Lomax, 1967, 508). This accompaniment of language, this NVC, varies from culture to culture. It has to be taught contrastively. There is enough information as of this moment for teachers to use in developing initial materials for this task. One thing is for sure: the students will not be bored, and they will realize immediately this is something they can put to very good use right away without having to wait until graduation to do so. The surrounding adults will also get the same message.

NVC should be taught together with language, that is, through the vernacular it uses. In other words, the English class for Puerto Ricans should include Black and Anglo (NYC) NVC in their dialoguing and role-playing, and in their readings; and the Spanish program for the Black children should also include Spanish NVC — Puerto Rican style — not just for District 23 but for many other districts in the City. The setting for this experiment is a perfect one: the community in District 23 is mostly Black and Puerto Rican. It could be easy to attain here an objective that the best educational systems of the world — as verified by Joshua Fishman in his latest study on bilingualism the world over — are determined to implement, namely, bilingual education for the enrichment of the child. Not as a remedial tool, not as a transition to make it possible for him to enter the mainstream, but as enrichment.

District 23 could very well implement the following for the establishment of the type of education these children need and deserve:

1. Training of teachers in NVC as it pertains to the District.
2. Preparation of K to 12 teaching-learning materials on these features of culture.
3. Training and involvement of principals, superintendents, local board and other administrators in this District.
4. Development of cultural inventories — NVC, linguistic, etc. — for the different ethnic groups involved in this District.

5. Community development and involvement by means of activities — classes, social programs, outings — that are culturally oriented, so the support of the parents and other members of the community, as well as their understanding, are won over for the activities being carried out in schools.

6. Retention of bilingual instruction of the Puerto Rican child in classrooms taught preferably by Puerto Rican teachers. This should be so for the elementary school years, and further if the child is found to need it.

7. Integration of Black and Puerto Rican children after elementary school and only after careful in-service training of all teachers involved and preparation of adequate materials, besides the proper involvement of the parents.

8. Development of additional research on the sociology of the area, as well as on additional cultural features.

9. Development of a testing program on culture for both ethnic groups.

I am sure there is the vision and devotion necessary to carry out all of the above in District 23. Many of the teachers we met in the schools of the District are quite capable and devoted people, and with some direction, they could do all of the above and more. The challenge is great, but the rewards will be immense in terms of human satisfaction and salvation.

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